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ABSTRACT

These two theme issues of "Impact" discuss inclusive education for children with disabilities at the preschool to first grade level and at the kindergarten to grade 12 level respectively. The articles present different ways that families and professionals include children with and without disabilities in educational and child care settings, with the common element in their success coming largely through collaboration among many people and agencies. The articles include: "Early Education: Which Path to Inclusion?" (Mary A. McEvoy and others); "The Struggle, the Reward: Two Families' Experiences with Inclusion" (Debra Carroll and others); "Infants, Toddlers, and the Integrated Community" (Linda Kjerland); "Early Intervention in Day Care Settings" (Mary Beth Bruder); "Integration: A Cooperative Effort" (Betty Kasel); "Social Interaction Training for Young Children with Disabilities" (Richard J. Spicuzza); "Staff Training for Inclusion" (Dennis J. Sykes); "Integration in Early Childhood Education: An Administrator's Perspective" (interview with Jean Rochelle); "Transition to Integrated Kindergarten Programs: Child, Family, and Program Issues" (Lynette K. Chandler); "The Million Dollar Question..." (Terri Vandercook and others); "Toward a Shared Agenda for General and Special Education" (Jennifer York); "America 2000: A Revolution in American Education" (Anne Smith and others); "Step by Step: A System's Evolution toward Inclusion" (Richard Schattman); "The Power of One" (Terri Vandercook); "Plungers, Followers, Joiners, and Wailers: A Lesson from Nature" (Terri Vandercook and others); "Interpersonal Skills for Effective Collaboration" (Jacqueline Thousand and Richard Villa); "Creative Problem-Solving: Not Just for Adults" (Michael F. Giangreco); "The Classroom Is 'Where It's At' for Communication Services" (Cathy Macdonald); "Promoting Social Inclusion beyond the School Community" (Brian Abery); and "All Means All...Even the Yes-But and Whadabout Kids" (Marsha Forest and Jack Pearpoint). Lists of suggested reading materials on inclusive learning environments are included (14 entries). (JDD)

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INSTITUTE ON COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

IMPACT

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Early Education: Which Path to Inclusion?

by Mary A. McEvoy, Carla Peterson, and Scott McConnell

Early childhood special education is at a cross-roads. Over the past few years we have seen rapid expansion in services to young children with disabilities. In fact, the mandate for services is nearly nationwide for children ages three to five. Further, we have an array of programmatic options and models for serving these children in integrated settings. Finally, researchers in the field are exerting unprecedented efforts to evaluate and refine these program features and models to ensure maximally effective services in the least restrictive environment for all young children with disabilities. As school districts and parents consider classrooms and programs that serve children with and without disabilities as a first placement option in meeting the spirit of "least restrictive environment", the question arises: What is the best model for assuring successful placement in integrated programs?

Anne Ellis (left), the first student with severe disabilities to be fully integrated into her first grade classroom, shares with a classmate the excitement of success in a computer game. See story on page 3.

Clearly there is no one best model. However, it appears that there are a number of "best practices" that should be used when designing and implementing integrated programs. Five best practices that individually have been shown to be important components of successful integrated programs are:

- Use of environmental and organizational design principles.
- Social integration of students with/without disabilities.
- Inclusion of families.
- Use of a transdisciplinary team approach.
- Use of a functional data-based instructional curriculum that can be applied in variety of naturalistic and instructional settings.

Path, continued on page 15

From the Editors:

This issue of IMPACT focuses on inclusive education for young children with disabilities. In these pages, parents, program administrators, researchers, and educators share information about different ways that families and professionals have gone about the process of including children with and without disabilities in educational and child care settings. There is no one best model and there are no strategies that guarantee rapid and easy success. There is, however, a common element in the efforts profiled here: success comes largely through collaboration between many people and agencies. We hope that the examples of collaboration and the strategies presented here will provide direction and encouragement to readers who are undertaking the process of including children with disabilities in early childhood programs.

This is the first of a two-part IMPACT series focusing on inclusive education; the second feature issue emphasizing inclusive education for K-12 will be available in September 1991.

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A report from the Institute on Community Integration (a University Affiliated Program) at the University of Minnesota. Dedicated to improving community services and social supports for persons with disabilities and their families.

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The Struggle, The Reward: Two Families' Experiences with Inclusion

The benefits of inclusion for children with disabilities are well documented. The right of access to those benefits is not, however, interpreted in the same manner from setting to setting. On these pages two families share the stories of their efforts to obtain inclusive education for their daughters. While both families have overcome many barriers, one family is now enjoying the rewards of their persistence while the other is still facing incredible obstacles to meeting their child's educational, social, and developmental needs.

• Trying to Keep Hope Alive, *by Debra Carroll*

From the very moment I found out my child had a developmental disability, I began to educate myself about her disability and the best educational methods for working with a child like her. My daughter, Elizabeth, now 6 years old, has Rett Syndrome, which is a rare neurological disorder in girls. I immediately tried to surround myself with persons knowledgable about her disability and became friends with several professors in special education from a university near my home. Before Elizabeth entered the public school system I had heard the phrases "least restrictive environment", "integration", "inclusion", and "mainstreaming". I knew what they meant in terms of their definitions, and I promoted their existence. But I still had no conception as to how integration could benefit Elizabeth. She has severe to profound mental retardation and no reasonable form of communication. When she entered the public school system at age 4, she still had poor eye contact and did not respond to simple commands, such as "come here". How could a child like Elizabeth benefit from integration? How could she make friends? How would the other children play with her? I couldn't visualize how integration could work for her.

Elizabeth went through two school years of no meaningful integration with typically developing age-appropriate peers. Children from her self-contained classroom ate in the lunchroom with the rest of the school, but they sat at a separate table, noticeably and physically separated from the rest of the lunchroom by being positioned perpendicular to the rest of the tables. Elizabeth's class went out to a playground where there were typically developing children, but she was left to "wander" the area during recess, and no planned or meaningful integration took place.

It was not until last summer, when we placed Elizabeth in a regular kindergarten classroom at a church school year-round program that I began to really understand the difference integration can mean for our family. The Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation in our state had started a program where they paid an "assistant" of the parents' choice to go with the child to an integrated summer program. We picked out this particular program due to the enthusiasm of the director and kindergarten teacher in meeting the challenge, and due to the physical proximity to our home. The special education teacher we hired sat down with the class the second day Elizabeth was there and explained to them that Elizabeth had a disability, but that she was just like the rest of them: she had a home, a pet, and her own room.

We began to see a difference in Elizabeth at home that very first week. She made herself more involved in the daily activities going on at home. She would come sit with the rest of the family and initiate eye contact with us, and generally communicated her needs much better by eye-pointing. Her temperament also improved. After a few weeks, I began to observe her in class and noticed that the special education teacher had faded back and the kindergarten children were talking and playing with Elizabeth as if she did not have a disability. She responded by following their lead in many activities, including art, playtimes, and lunch. I was amazed one day when the class was out on the playground and the kindergarten teacher called the children to line up to go back inside. My first reaction was to find Elizabeth, take her by hand and physically move her into the line, as I had always done. To my amazement, she had followed the lead of the other children and had lined herself up with them and was standing there very patiently waiting to go inside. It was then that I began to have real hope for Elizabeth's future. She was making progress and the difference was simple - she was placed in a "normalized" environment with age-appropriate, typically developing peers. It was obvious that she would only learn by seeing other children doing what we had been instructing her to do all along. Just telling her how to act appropriately was not enough, and perhaps our communication was not meaningful to her. She needed the other children to be her model.

While many parents across the country are reporting how they have worked cooperatively with their school systems to design integrated programs, it has been a long, hard struggle for us with our local school system. In general, they have resisted our efforts to have Elizabeth integrated into a regular kindergarten classroom for a good portion of the day at her school of zone. After refusing our requests for inclusion at several staffings, we were left with no alternative but to try and resolve Elizabeth's placement issue through the Due Process Hearing arena. Our evidence

Hope, continued on page 11

• **Realizing the Vision,** *by Gary Ellis and Diane Kozlak*

"At school, Annie's friends greet her with her own 'Hi' signal, vertical palm facing forward. When it's her turn in a computer game, classmates place her hand on the switch, then make her wait while they take their turns. If she slides to one side of her chair, they push her back up with a casual shove. Her 24 classmates enjoy being her helper and one, Caroline Becker, names Annie as one of her three favorite friends." (St. Paul Pioneer Press, "Retarded Girl Finds Her Place in Real World", by Ann Baker, October 10, 1990).

These successes of integrative education programming were recounted in a recent newspaper article about our daughter's school program. Annie was the first student with severe mental and physical disabilities to be fully included in her neighborhood kindergarten and first grade class in the Mounds View School District. Such successes are powerful reinforcement for the hard work and commitment of school staff, students, and parents - essential ingredients for an effective integrated education program.

We have two daughters attending the Turtle Lake Elementary School: Marlo, age 10 and Anne, age 6. They are great support for one another and, like all kids, have their own special needs for friends and acceptance. However, because Anne was born with developmental disabilities she has had to overcome many barriers to her full participation in school life.

During the first three years of her life Anne received therapy and other programming services through the St. Paul and North Suburban D.A.C. After she turned three, new legislation went into effect that required local school districts to provide programming for children with disabilities. Our school district contracted with Special District 916 to provide services to Anne at a segregated site. Although we were pleased with the programming that Anne was receiving, we found the segregated site lacking in many ways. Since none of the children in Anne's classroom talked or were ambulatory, the only verbal communication and role models for her were her teachers.

Her life was without playmates or friends. Since her pre-school experience was outside of the neighborhood setting, she did not have opportunities to make friends with other children in her neighborhood. We decided we wanted more for Anne when she entered kindergarten and elementary school.

This decision began a process that spanned over one year to convince Mounds View School District officials to provide services for Anne in her neighborhood school. The process of expressing our vision for Anne resulted in a very positive team approach to beginning an inclusive education project in our district.

Anne began kindergarten and then first grade by riding to school on the same bus as her classmates and joining them full time in the regular classroom. Our pain of watching the isolation of Anne's life changes to the excitement of seeing her surrounded by other children who were drawn to her uniqueness and enjoyed her friendship.

How is the integrated learning process working out in the classroom? It is benefitting all the children. For instance, since Anne uses sign language to communicate there has been great interest from her classmates to not only learn her signs, but sign language in general. Students often come up to Anne and show her the new signs they have learned. Students also have become actively involved in adapting Ann's environment to fit her needs. One day in art Anne was having difficulty gluing paper together. A classmate came up with the idea of using a paintbrush to apply the glue. In addition, Ann's classmates have really learned the art of patience as well as tolerance. They not only will wait for Anne to respond rather than answer for her, but appear more tolerant to the differences of other peers in the class. Very seldom are negative things said about other people in the class.

Along with the interaction with her peers at school, we have been pleasantly surprised to find that Anne has new friendships outside of school. She has been invited to the birthday parties of her friends, boys and girls alike. When we attend school or community functions, children come over to say hello to Anne and introduce her to their families.

We have been amazed to see the many changes taking place in Anne. She has become more interested in communicating her needs, both verbally and with sign language. She is also more motivated to be upright and learn to walk. We believe this increased motivation is due largely to the role models of her peers and her desire to interact with them.

These experiences have certainly convinced us of the value and naturalness of integrated programming. It is a constant challenge to facilitate this learning process and we are thankful for the enthusiasm and dedication of the professionals who have been part of Anne's team. We are also thankful for the openness of Anne's classmates who accept her for her abilities. Most of all we are very proud of Anne who plays the key role in all of these efforts. Her sister Marlo wrote about Anne in a way that sums up all of our sentiments: "I am thankful for my sister. I think that if my sister was not handicapped, I wouldn't be half the person I am. My parents have helped me learn more about disabilities. My sister gets into my stuff like any first grader would."

Contributed by Gary Ellis and Diane Kozlak, Anne's parents, who live in Shoreview, Minnesota.

Infants, Toddlers, and the Integrated Community

by Linda Kjerland

The 1980s will be remembered as the decade that opened doors for many children with disabilities to enter schools, "regular" classrooms and after school activities, and recreation programs. Young children and their families have benefitted from these opened doors through developmental gains and increased opportunities for friendship for the children, and through a growing confidence for families that their children belong in more ways and in more places than seemed possible in the past.

This growing vision of inclusion for infants, toddlers, and their families has impacted professionals who work with them, shifting to a new focus on supporting families in a way that is more harmonious with their everyday life. This isn't an easy evolution for staff whose training has been in traditional models and whose systems may offer few supports for this more inventive and functional approach. As a means to understand this evolution, I will share the story of our journey at Project Dakota Outreach as we've moved toward a philosophy of family support and inclusion.

Three-year-old Andrea, who has Down syndrome, shares a story with her cousin Jason in the family day care she's attended since she was six weeks old.

The story begins in 1981 when 'our' special needs preschool children were looked at in terms of overall 'readiness' to withstand the rigors of placement in an integrated preschool of 20 children. The conclusion nearly always was that each child was seen as "not ready." We then decided to make those *settings* 'ready,' i.e., more like us. We decided to send an early interventionist with a small cluster of these children into each setting to team teach, lend equipment, and adapt the curriculum. Our goal was to reshape the preschool so that it more closely resembled our special preschool rather than adapting for individual children within the context of their existing preschool. This approach neglected to recognize and respect the inherent autonomy and uniqueness of the nursery schools. Not surprisingly we received thinly disguised 'no, thanks' either at the time of the offer or in the early months of the 'partnership.'

From that experience we decided if we couldn't wholly import our program out there, we should bring non-delayed children in. This reverse mainstreaming involved sprinkling groups of three to five neighborhood children into groups of five to seven Dakota children. While obvious benefits resulted we found ourselves doing the double work of being in the business of nursery school as well as of early intervention. Such extension of resources was hard to justify when short distances away were successfully operating nursery schools.

Reverse mainstreaming did, however, build confidence in the idea that there was much to be gained from integration. Impetus for change also came from early mainstreaming studies and our growing understanding of social and cognitive development. How could we promote social competence if we withheld exposure to the natural learning and teaching that happens among peers? Finding a way to include children in integrated environments not only became a topic of staff discussion, but also became a stronger part of contacts with all families.

Questions shifted from "Which nursery could possibly handle Jo?", to "What does that nursery school do well that Jo could be part of and benefit from?", "What might we learn about Jenny if we sit back and observe her interactions in a typical setting?", "What do those teachers with the sharp eye of the experience on the 'range of normal' have to tell us?", and "What do we want to achieve and what kind of assistance and roles will be helpful?"

Our next era came in realizing that there is more to the notion of inclusion than nursery school attendance. Informal settings became just as important and merited team time, attention, and resources. Families and staff scoured local newsletters and announcements for toddler tumbling events, library story hours, and playground tot lot and wading pool schedules. Even kids' day at the mall became a target for fun, inclusion, and learning. This broader definition of natural resources and settings within the community opened up the idea that there was certainly no magical time to wait to begin participation, i.e., age three or four.

We copied what most infants and toddlers were doing

and picked up on ideas from them. Many were in child care centers because parents worked. Others were tagging along on the delightful diversions of older children in their neighborhood. They were in church nurseries on Sunday mornings, drop-in child care at malls, and part of parent and child playgroups run by parent education centers. Those settings became targets for early intervention strategies by teams. Soon 100% of children were spending time each week with non-delayed peers. Family members excitedly recounted new adventures and staff passed on the creativity of one family to others.

If readers wonder at what stage they may be regarding inclusion of young children, the statements below may serve to identify their present philosophy:

- Stage 1: Early intervention means plenty of specialized help at an early age to reduce/prevent later problems; there isn't time for typical settings.
- Stage 2: Typical settings are helpful for older preschoolers with milder needs who will benefit from the socialization.
- Stage 3: Typical settings are helpful for preschoolers with moderate and severe needs because of the natural motivators and rich environments that help all areas of development.
- Stage 4: All ages, including very young toddlers, benefit from nondelayed peers due to the motivators of active playmates and the focus on functional skills. We can no longer deny children the culture of childhood by demanding interventions take place in specialized settings.
- Stage 5: Typical peers and typical settings are the right of all children needing early intervention. Staff roles and expertise are stretched and altered for the better because of learning to work in context on functional and vital skills. Good teamwork in typical settings not only addresses primary needs of children, but helps prevent secondary handicaps that derive from social exclusion.

How can staff, friends, and neighbors join families in this endeavor? Perhaps the biggest change can be a recognition that the earliest years of getting out and about may take a bit more courage, inventiveness, and support from all concerned, but that the rewards shall indeed be great for all.

Contributed by Linda Kjerland, Project Director, Dakota, Inc., 680 O'Neill Drive, Eagan, MN 55121.

Suggested Readings on Inclusive Education

• Ostroskey, M., Chandler, L., Odom, S., McConnell, S., & Peterson, C. Comprehensive intervention manual to promote social interaction skills for preschool cildren with disabilities. Available from Vanderbilt/Minnesota Social Interaction Project, Box 40, Peabody College/ Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.

• Peck, C., Hayden, L., Wandschneider, G., Peterson, W., & Richarz, S. (1989) Development of integrated preschools: A qualitative inquiry into sources of resistence among parents, administrators, and teachers. Journal of Early Intervention, 13, 353-364.

The following are published by the Institute on Community Integration. For ordering information call (612) 624-4512 or write Publications Office, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, 109 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Dr. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

• Inclusive Education for Learners with Severe Disabilities: Print and Media Resources. An annually-updated listing of journals, books, manuals, reports, newsletters, videotapes, and other materials that can assist school personnel and families to include learners with severe disabilities in general education classes and school community life.

• IMPACT: Feature Issue on Inclusive Education (K-12). Available Fall 1991. A 20-page newsletter containing articles on practices, philosophies, research, and trends in inclusive education.

• Strategies for Full Inclusion (1989). J. York, T. Vandercook, C. Macdonald, and S. Wolff. A monograph containing seven papers presenting practical strategies and examples for designing and implementing inclusive educational programs. Especially useful for teachers and other school personnel.

• Inclusive School Communities: 10 Reasons Why. This brochure lists 10 reasons why more and more families and educators support inclusive school communities.

• Learning Together: Stories and Strategies. Parents, educators, and other professionals share success stories and strategies that offer ideas and inspiration to those seeking to include all chidlren, regardless of abilities and interests, in the schools and classes they would attend if they did not have labels.

Early Intervention in Day Care Settings

by Mary Beth Bruder

The natural group environment for infants and young children in today's society is community early childhood programs: child care programs, nursery schools, play groups, library groups, and recreation groups. Congress has reinforced this notion by stating that early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities should be provided in the types of settings in which infants and toddlers without disabilities would participate (Section 303.12(b), P.L. 99-457). Additionally, Part B of P.L. 99-457 affirms the requirement that preschool children with disabilities must receive special education and related services within least restrictive settings. This has provided the impetus for many early intervention programs to expand services into non-specialized, non-segregated community programs, the most prevalent of which are child care or day care programs.

The use of child care settings as early intervention placements is one strategy that seems to meet both the needs of families (for child care) and early intervention providers (for appropriate placements). However, the use of this model cannot be advocated without caution. Some day care programs have problems that may be exacerbated by this practice (e.g., failure to meet licensing regulations on child-adult ratios; high staff turnover; inaccessible buildings), and thus appropriate supports must be in place to insure the effective use of this strategy. Additionally, those who are involved in the provision of this service delivery model must adapt to new ideas and roles if the early intervention is to be successful. For example, specialists from the early intervention team must learn to function as consultants to the day care staff, and they must learn to design, implement, and evaluate interventions within typical early childhood program routines. These interventions will also necessitate a broadened focus on peer and environmental mediation as opposed to teacher directed learning. Likewise, day care staff may have to become more systematic in their interactions with children and their use of environmental designs and adaptations when incorporating children with disabilities into day care settings. Lastly, families of children with disabilities may also have to adapt their intervention expectations to accommodate a more generalized focus on socialization and learning as opposed to a traditional focus on isolated therapeutic interventions.

For the past four years the Connecticut Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) has been providing early intervention services to young children with disabilities within community settings. There are currently 200 infants and toddlers with moderate to severe disabilities receiving early intervention services within day care programs. The Early Childhood Special Education Community Integration Project and the Inservice Training Model for Day Care Staff (both federally funded model demonstration projects at the University of Connecticut) have been working with families, day care providers, and DMR staff to design, implement, and evaluate early intervention services delivered within day care settings.

The use of child care settings as early intervention placements is one strategy that seems to meet both the needs of families and early intervention providers.

Cindy Barberry is one of the parents who has been involved in the projects since their inception. Her daughter, Tara, who has Down syndrome, is now five years old and attends kindergarten in her neighborhood school (in which all the children have learned to sign to communicate with her) with the assistance of a teacher's aid and a combination of direct and consultative special education and related services. According to Cindy:

> "Tara's placement in a "normal" early childhood setting from age two was the most beneficial aspect of her education thus far. Not only did she learn all the social graces necessary for inclusion in society, she made friends among her typical age-appropriate peer group, relationships that continue to grow as she ages. Educationally, Tara has learned more in the integrated environment than she would ever have learned in a segregated classroom. I wish her inclusion was not "experimental", but rather the norm for all handicapped children. Tara will soon be entering first grade with her age-appropriate peer group. This is a direct result of her integration since day one in normal settings."

The many challenges inherent to the delivery of early intervention services within day care settings must be systematically addressed. As a result of the experiences in Connecticut, a number of positive practices have been identified that facilitate the effective implementation of this model. These include:

- A philosophical commitment to the belief that children with disabilities and children without disabilities can learn and play together in day care programs.
- A system of collaboration and communication with all agencies involved with the child and family (e.g., early intervention, medical services, social services).
- A consistent, ongoing system for family involvement.

- A system of cross disciplinary team planning (including day care staff), service delivery, and communication.
- A well-constructed, integrated, individualized education program or IFSP that focuses on child strengths, and includes the necessary supports to enable the child to continue to learn in the day care environment (e.g., environmental adaptations, supplementary teacher aids, technological assistance).
- A consistent and ongoing system for training and staff development for early intervention staff, day care staff, families, and (if appropriate), children.
- Integrated instructional delivery of educational and related services across day care activities and routines.
- A comprehensive system for evaluating the effects of the program on families, all children, and staff.

This service model has resulted in a number of positive outcomes for infants and young children with disabilities. Most importantly, their peers without disabilities have had the benefit of playing and learning beside infants and toddlers who have disabilities.

Contributed by Mary Beth Bruder, Director of Family Support and Early Intervention, MRI/Dept. of Early Intervention, New York Medical College, Valhalla, NY 10595.

Integration: A Cooperative Effort

by Betty Kasel

It was a typical way to celebrate Earth Day, 1991. The students in Stepping Stones preschool and kindergarten program were planting trees on the hill behind the school with the assistance of high school students from the Groves Academy. For some of the Stepping Stones children it was quite an accomplishment to climb up the back hill and to respond to the high school students' questions about the tree planting process. Approximately one-third of the students enrolled at Stepping Stones have difficulty performing many tasks in the cognitive, communicative, motor, sensory, self-help, social, emotional, and/or physical domains.

Stepping Stones was established in 1971 as an integrated early childhood program. In 1982 it joined the Groves Learning Center, a school for children with learning and/or attention problems. It is now an integral component of Groves Learning Center and benefits from the wide range of resources available to parents, students and staff. Stepping Stones also serves as an early childhood special education site for the St. Louis Park, Minnesota, public school district, which provides many support services including occupational therapy, physical therapy, adaptive physical education, and family therapy. Because of its success as an integrated program, the program has grown to include students from other school districts, and county, state, and professional agencies.

Stepping Stones curriculum is built around a weekly unit theme similar to other preschool/kindergarten programs. The difference is not so much in the content of the curriculum, but in the method of presentation. A hands-on approach is followed whereby children learn by doing. Activities focus on communication, inquiry, construction, and artistic expression. Experiences are not only enjoyable but connected to further experiences. Teachers follow a daily schedule that is structured to balance active and calming activities. A pictoral schedule is posted in the classrooms and discussed daily. This allows children to prepare for transitions as well as schedule variations. The childrens' repertoire of songs is also posted with pictoral cues so they can actively participate in music selections. Whenever possible, multisensory approaches and brief positive language is used to facilitate learning. An emphasis is placed on enhancing self-esteem through positive peer interactions and successful learning experiences. With a minimum 1:7 staff/student ratio, individual needs can be met in all areas of development. This individualized attention to children's progress helps them to grow toward independence.

The inclusion of children with special needs gives an extra dimension for all of the children enrolled in the Stepping Stones program. Close contacts with a child with various difficulties teaches patience, sensitivity, and understanding as no other experience can. As students question others' individual differences, the staff provides simple and honest answers. Children learn they can help as well as be helped. Once their questions are answered they are able to evaluate their classmates as individual personalities in an open, honest and accepting manner. In fact, when children with special needs accomplish difficult tasks, they have many peers to cheer them on. As children learn to understand individual differences, they develop maturity, self-confidence, independence, and a willingness to try new things. Our goal is to enable all of our students to successfully manage life experiences as they transition from our program into a private or public kindergarten/first grade.

Contributed by Betty Kasel, Director, Stepping Stones Preschool, 3200 S. Hwy 100, St. Louis Park, MN 55416.

Social Interaction Training for Young Children with Disabilities

Richard J. Spicuzza

Preschool children with disabilities are at significant risk for problems in the development of social interaction skills. As a result of early learning problems and initial skill deficits, as well as frequent educational placement in segregated settings, the problems that these children experience may be expected to worsen and intensify throughout their lifetimes. The end result comes at a significant cost to the children, their families, school, and society. Recently, there has been a concerted effort to include children with developmental delays in programs that serve typically developing children. Unfortunately, an integrated environment is often not a sufficient intervention in and of itself to promote social interaction between children with disabilities and their more socially competent peers. In most cases, the physical environment alone cannot reduce social behavior problems. Typically developing peers, furthermore, may not have been instructed on how to initiate or sustain social interactions with children with developmental delays. Researchers have developed and evaluated ways to remediate many of these social interaction problems. However, it has become increasingly obvious that a gap exists between research knowledge and the practical application of intervention features.

Unfortunately, an integrated environment is often not a sufficient intervention in and of itself to promote social interaction between children with disabilities and their more socially competent peers.

To bridge this gap between research studies and implementation in preschool settings, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services funded the "Social Interaction Training Program for Young Children with Handicaps" (SIP). This four year Program Feature Project, under the direction of Dr. Samuel Odom at Vanderbilt University and Dr. Scott McConnell at the University of Minnesota, has looked at ways to effectively translate research into practice. SIP project staff, working in close collaboration with early childhood special education teachers in Minnesota and Tennessee, have initiated research activities that include a) a descriptive study of the classroom environments; b) an observational study of children's social interactions; and c) the design and implementation of four intervention packages to teach social interaction skills to young children with and without disabilities. These four interventions are called: *Environmental Arrangement, Child-Specific, Peer-Mediated*, and *Comprehensive Intervention*. The four interventions can be viewed as separate intervention packages or as a building block for each successive program. What follows is a brief description of each of these interventions.

The first intervention, Environmental Arrangements, is the initial building block for all intervention. The key components of this intervention include limiting the physical space or play area, examining the nature of the play activity or toys, and using developmentally heterogenous play groups. The Environmental Arrangements intervention is an important part of all the interventions described next.

The Child Specific intervention incorporates the previously mentioned components, plus integrates teacher prompts and feedback to target children during structured play groups. A social skill training group for targeted children provides verbal descriptions of behaviors (e.g. sharing, assisting, organizing play, etc.) to be learned along with opportunities for the children with disabilities to role play the newly learned skills.

The Peer-Mediated intervention also incorporates the Environmental Arrangements package, with the addition of social skill training. Using this intervention, normally developing peers are taught to direct social initiations toward classmates who exhibit social interaction deficits. Teachers prompt and provide feedback to the normally developing peer during structured play groups.

The last intervention package, the Comprehensive Intervention, uses features of each of the proceeding three interventions. This intervention integrates the social skill training for children with disabilities and peers into one single lesson. Children are taught new skills and then practice these social interaction skills in a more natural setting. Teachers continue to support the social skills learned by children with disabilities and their peers through the use prompts and feedback.

This research project has focused on developing effective and efficient interventions to promote social interaction skills. The interventions described above should assist teachers in producing valid and lasting changes in the social behavior of young children with disabilities in integrated settings.

Contributed by Richard J. Spicuzza, Doctoral Student, Department of Educational Psychology , University of Minnesota. For more information about the SIP Project contact Dr. Scott McConnell, N548 Elliott Hall, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, or Dr. Samual Odom, Box 328GPC, Peabody College/Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37203.

Staff Training for Inclusion

by Dennis J. Sykes

A federally funded inservice training project in Ohio has taken a different, and apparently successful, approach to staff training related to the inclusion of young children with disabilities in community early childhood programs. The Early Integration Training Project of the Ohio State University's Center for Special Needs Populations has been in operation since September of 1989 and is funded through the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs. The project's purpose is to develop model inservice training that will facilitate the inclusion of young children with disabilities, birth through age five, and their families into a variety of existing community early childhood programs. After an initial development period, the project began its training in four pilot counties (two urban, two rural) in the spring of 1990 and has since expanded the training to over 20 additional counties involving more than 500 professionals, paraprofessionals, and parents in the 15 hour series. Over 1,200 individuals in more than 40 Ohio counties are expected to participate by the end of the project's initial funding period in August, 1992.

There are several features of the training and the project that the project staff believe contribute to its popularity and to the fact that more than 95% of individuals beginning the training complete the 15 hour series: (1) a value-based approach; (2) a format and incentives that invite diversity; and (3) an approach to program and service development that is based upon the strengths of existing community resources.

The initial design of the Early Integration Training Project was based upon a competency model. Skill development related to the inclusion of young children with disabilities was to be provided for teachers, teacher assistants, and administrators in community child care, preschool, and other "regular" early childhood programs. Encouraging the use instead of a "value-based" approach to training, advisory committee members, project consultants, and project participants contributed to the subsequent development of the project and identified five basic values or beliefs that underlie the training: (1) young children with disabilities have more similarities than dissimilarities with typically developing children; (2) the inclusion of young children with disabilities in regular community programs can be a positive and beneficial experience for all involved; (3) the family is the key context in which the child develops; (4) collaboration with other programs, professionals, and families can contribute to enhanced outcomes for children and families, and (5) the structure and approach of current services can be enhanced through individual and collaborative effort.

It has been the observation of project staff that most inservice training efforts in education and human services tend to segregate participants. Public school teachers attend workshops with their peers, as do administrators, parents, Head Start teachers, child-care staff, therapists, etc. While this may be an appropriate approach to individual skill development, it does not appear to encourage the cross-disciplinary collaboration required for successful inclusion efforts. The design of the Early Integration Training modules is intended to reinforce the belief that the learning needs of individuals can be successfully accommodated within a diverse group if individual strengths are capitalized upon and an atmosphere of mutual respect is engendered. Diversity within the project's training groups (whose average size is approximately 25 individuals) is encouraged through active recruitment. In addition, participants are eligible for a variety of inservice and university credits. The project currently cooperates with the Ohio Department of Education, Health, Human Services, and Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities along with six other Ohio Universities to offer the training series for inservice, undergraduate, and graduate credit depending upon the needs and desires of the particular participant. Parents of children with and without disabilities are seen as an especially important part of a training group's diversity and their involvement has been recruited actively and successfully.

Participants in the project often have the same critical request of project staff and consultants: "Please give us (show us, share with us, point us to) the model of service delivery we should be using." Drawing from experience, the project has developed its own belief about "models". Models are only useful insofar as they provide information and ideas that are applicable to particular communities, staff, and families. The truth about any "model" is that it was developed in a particular location, with particular resources (human and otherwise), and with particular children and families in mind. Therefore, any community wishing to develop high-quality, inclusive, family-centered services must complete a series of preliminary steps. First, the community must assess their resources (these may be defined quite broadly). Second, a consensus or a "shared vision" must be created. Finally, resources and ideas from outside the community which seem most appropriate and helpful must be adapted to meet the "shared vision" using resources identified previously. To do otherwise risks the development of inappropriate, ineffective services.

Contributed by Dennis J. Sykes, Director, Early Integration Training Project, Center for Special Needs Populations College of Education, The Ohio State University 700 Ackerman Road, Suite 440, Columbus, OH 43202. He may be contacted for information on project materials.

Integration in Early Childhood Education: An Administrator's Perspective

Jean Rochelle, Coordinator of Special Programs for the Hickman County Schools in Centerville, Tennessee, was interviewed for this article and was asked to share her perspective as an administrator on inclusion of young children with special needs.

• Question: Please describe your experiences with integration/inclusion of young children with special needs.

I have served as special education supervisor in a rural school system for the past six years, and during that time we have served approximately 20 preschool children (3,4, and 5 year olds) each year. Most of these children had either speech or language impairments. The two speech therapists in our school system have been heavily involved in program development and implementation for the students. Teacher involvement would include five to ten special education teachers and approximately the same number of "regular" education teachers. Five to ten kindergarten classrooms have been utilized.

The types of programs and integration opportunities have varied according to the needs of the students. A four-year-old girl with physical impairments provides a good example of how children with disablilities have been integrated in our system. This child has been diagnosed as being affected by TAR syndrome, which involves the absence of the radius and ulna in the forearm. Her hands are attached to the body at the elbow area, which obviously causes difficulty with balance as well as fine and gross motor tasks. She also suffers from a disorder in which the clotting of the blood is inhibited, and as a result she bruises very easily. Intellectually she functions at a level with her chronological peers. Numerous integration activities were incorporated into this child's individualized education program. Adaptations of the school environment were necessary to provide an educational program in the least restrictive environment.

Teachers and administrators were understandably apprehensive regarding the implementation of a program for this child. The family initially requested a full time teacher assistant to accompany her throughout the school day. After several meetings and the sharing of information among all parties, we were able to develop a program that met the child's needs and was acceptable to all members of the multi-disciplinary team.

Transportation proved to be an interesting hurdle to overcome. Since members of the M-team (IEP team) felt that the child would need someone to sit with her on the bus, her brother was asked to sit with her. Eventually this proved to be a problem since he felt confined, and an older student on the bus who was held in high esteem by the parents was enlisted to sit with the child and provide any necessary assistance. A teacher assistant was assigned to meet the bus at school and assist the student in negotiating the bus steps.

A number of adaptations were made to facilitate her participation in the school setting. Small chairs with arms were purchased for use in classrooms. Soft "nerf" balls of various sizes, a mat, and an adapted swing (toddler style with front enclosure) were purchased for use in physical education classes. In music class the child was instructed to sit on the bottom row of seats in order to minimize the risk of injury due to a fall. The M-team suggested that she wear pullover shirts and pants that fit somewhat loosely and have narrow elastic since she has very little strength in her fingers and she is not able to button/unbutton her clothing without assistance at this time. Her parents were also asked to attach small cloth loops to her pants in order that she could grasp them and assist with moving clothing up and down during toileting. Strips of velcro were used to attach her crayon box to the table since the box seemed to end up often on the floor. Teachers suggested that she go first or last to the rug for group activities. This, of course, would lessen the possibility of being bumped and falling. A coat rack was installed that was lower and thus more accessible for the student. Glue sticks were recommended by the teachers as opposed to tubes due to the lack of hand/finger strength.

Other interventions recommended by the M-team included selection of a "calmer" group of students to sit with the student at lunch. A helmet designed for her was worn during physical education classes. Low-top sneakers with velcro closures were also recommended. The child was instructed to always play in grassy areas on the playground, and never around the rocky areas.

The student is accompanied in the hall between classes by a teacher assistant, and also receives assistance at lunch and in boarding the school bus in the afternoon. All classes are in the regular classroom except one hour each day that is spent with a special education teacher working on fine motor skills. Occupational and physical therapy activities are integrated with the program as prescribed by the therapists.

• Question: Is integration currently done on a case by case basis (e.g., by parent request or teacher recommendation) or is it a system-wide policy to integrate children with special needs?

All special needs children in our system are educated in the least restrictive environment with maximum opportunities for integration.

Question: What are major obstacles and administrative issues that you face in implementation of integration?

The major obstacles and administrative issues that I have faced revolve around a lack of knowledge and experience on the part of those who will be implementing programs. Teachers and administrators seem to automatically assume that any child with special needs will require extensive special education services, and that only special education personnel are trained to meet the needs of these children. Personnel also perceive additional liability by having such children in their classrooms, and are genuinely concerned about legal action from parents if injury occurs or if for some reason a child's program can not be implemented as planned by the team.

Also, many parents tend to be excessively protective of their young children with disabilities, and understandably so. However, this carries over into the school environment and often hinders a child's progress toward becoming more independent.

• Question: How have solutions to these obstacles been worked out? Please give examples of solutions.

I have found that it is extremely important to gather all possible data prior to developing a program, and to be certain that those data are shared with all parties before the M-team meeting in which the program is planned. It is also important to reassure (repeatedly) non-special education teachers that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to instruct these children, with the support of special education personnel. We do our best to present special needs children as a challenge rather than a burden, and are careful to point out the benefits to non-disabled children of having a child with a disability in their classroom.

We deal with our excessively protective parents firmly but gently and realize that a level of trust must be established, which can only be accomplished over time. We encourage parents to contact us whenever they have questions or concerns, and involve them as much as possible in the planning and implementation of their child's program. Parent involvement is extremely critical in providing services for these children.

• Question: What are future goals in your school district for integration of children with special needs?

Goals in our school system for integration of children with special needs are as follows:

- To continue emphasis on provision of services in the least restrictive environment.
- To continue efforts toward educating teachers, administrators, and other school personnel regarding the needs of young children with disabilities.
- To improve and increase parental involvement in the development and implementation of programs for their children with special needs.
- To increase public awareness relative to services for children with special needs.
- To utilize consultants whenever necessary to plan appropriate educational programs for these children.

Hope, continued from page 2

was overwhelming - Elizabeth had made no significant progress during the first two years she was in a self-contained classroom. After hearing our testimony and the school system's responses, the hearing officer rendered his decision two months later in our favor and ordered the school system to place her in our school of zone and organize a planned and purposeful program of integration. Immediately following this decision, I wrote the school system a formal letter requesting a staffing. The school system refused to hold a staffing, and the following month they filed for Appeal. Before the Appeal Hearing, the school system began including two other schools in the negotiation process. After visiting both schools, I determined that neither seemed appropriate. In January of this year, the Appeal was heard in federal court. They indicated that an elementary school 25 minutes away from us was the most appropriate placement for our child. This was the first time I had ever heard of this particular school. The judge did not allow my attorney to cross examine the special education teacher from this school, or to have any of our witnesses testify, including us - the parents. He ruled that he did not feel it was "society's obligation to provide educational benefit" when that benefit was teaching my child how to go to the bathroom or how to eat on her own. The federal judge overturned the hearing officer's decision and took away an assistant that was to work with my daughter even though the assistant was not an issue in this appeal.

It has been over three months since the judge's ruling, and we cannot get him to sign an order so that we can Appeal to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. Also, the school system has still not allowed us to convene a staffing. Elizabeth's IEP is over 1 1/2 years old and she has not been to school one day this school year.

I will keep on with the struggle for something that seemed so simple and obvious. But we realize that every day Elizabeth does not get an appropriate program is a day that is forever lost. The hope we felt last summer for Elizabeth still survives. I just hope our efforts will keep this hope alive for her.

Contributed by Debra Carroll, Elizabeth's mother.

Transition to Integrated Kindergarten Programs: Child, Family, and Program Issues

by Lynette K. Chandler

Transition is a concept that has been used to describe the process of moving from one program or service delivery mode to another. It is an important part of a young child's education program, and presents opportunities for children to progress in many areas as they learn new skills, transfer and strengthen existing skills across programs, make new friends, interact with new peers, and learn to adjust to and take advantage of new experiences. For many children with disabilities, the transition from preschool to kindergarten will involve a move from a segregated special education program to an integrated kindergarten program. Integrated kindergarten programs are considered the optimal setting for many children with disabilities because they may provide a more stimulating, demanding, socially responsive, and normalizing environment than segregated programs that include only children with similar developmental skills.

Successful transition to an integrated program is dependent on transition planning and child preparation within preschool and kindergarten programs. Transitions that are well-planned maximize the probability of a smooth and effective transition. When they are not well planned, and children and families are not prepared for the new program, transitions can be stressful and unsettling and a time of insecurity, uncertainty, and vulnerability. The responsibility for transition planning and child preparation is shared by many individuals: it involves a team approach that is dependent on communication and cooperation between teachers in the preschool and kindergarten program, administrators in each program, and the child's family. Each member of the child's transition team will have different responsibilities and will complete different tasks related to transition.

• Preparation Within the Preschool Program

Staff within the preschool program are responsible for initiating the transition process and for preparing the child and family during the child's final year in preschool. Two types of skills are important to consider when preparing a child for transition to an integrated program. These include academic/preacademic skills and survival skills. Academic skills such as printing one's own name, matching colors and numbers, identifying objects by use, and understanding basic concepts of size, shape, and category generally are taught through traditional preschool and kindergarten curricula and are identified on developmental assessments and kindergarten readiness tests.

Survival skills consist of skills and behaviors that a child will need to function well and cope with the demands of an integrated kindergarten program. Survival skills may be divided into academic support skills, social skills, self-help skills, and conduct skills. Academic support skills often are necessary for a child to begin and complete academic tasks and include behaviors such as following group directions, completing work in a timely manner, finding materials needed for a task, and seeking assistance appropriately. Social skills, such as playing cooperatively, expressing emotion appropriately, interacting without aggression, and respecting others and their property promote positive interaction with peers and adults in a variety of academic and play situations. Self-help skills allow a child to function in the integrated classroom without extensive teacher assistance and attention. Self-help skills include taking care of belongings, toileting and dressing independently, avoiding obvious dangers, and employing problem solving strategies. Conduct skills such as working without disrupting peers, listening to warning words, and understanding their role as part of a group allow children to conform to classroom rules and routines and the behavior expectations of teachers.

Survival and academic skills influence a child's adjustment to and success in an integrated kindergarten program. Academic skills that approximate those of other children in the class allow a child with disabilities to be integrated during academic periods. This provides the child with the opportunity to participate in group activities, observe and imitate positive peer behavior, and receive assistance from peers. Survival skills influence a child's social and behavioral adjustment to the new program and how well a child functions in social and academic situations within the program. They also influence teacher perceptions of achievement and the willingness of a teacher to maintain a child with special needs in an integrated classroom. Children who exhibit poor survival skills, require inordinate amounts of teacher time, have difficulty in peer interaction, and present behavior management problems are more likely to be referred for segregated placement than children with adequate or good survival skills.

Although the importance of survival skills is recognized, they often are not part of preschool and kindergarten curricula and are not readily identified on developmental assessments and kindergarten readiness tests. Teachers in the preschool program will need to identify what survival skills are necessary for successful transition to an integrated program and teach these skills before the child enters kindergarten. One way to identify critical survival and academic skills is to identify differences between programs

in terms of classroom composition, frequency and type of attention/assistance provided to children, physical arrangement of the room, daily activities and routines, skill expectations, classroom rules and behavior management techniques, teacher-child ratio, size of instructional groups, type and number of directions used, expected level of independent performance during academic and social activities, and the type of curricular materials employed. Preschool teachers may identify critical skills and program differences by observing the kindergarten program or exchanging information with the teacher. For example, they may ask kindergarten teachers to provide samples of lesson plans and classroom curricula, to identify skills that children are expected to display during the first weeks of kindergarten, and to prioritize the importance of academic and survival skills that have been identified in the early childhood special education literature or on kindergarten readiness tests.

After critical skills, similarities, and differences across programs have been identified, preschool teachers will need to (a) develop goals that will promote skills that are critical to survival in the integrated program, (b) develop methods to teach these goals, (c) provide children with experiences that are related to the experiences they will have when they enter kindergarten, (d) develop methods to minimize the differences between programs, and (e) build upon program similarities as a method to facilitate generalization across settings. For example, preschool teachers may teach children to use simple worksheets during preacademic activities, if worksheets are a common part of the kindergarten curriculum. They might teach survival skills that children will need to interact with typical children in an integrated setting, such as sharing, peer initiation, and cooperative play. Teachers can minimize the differences between programs by increasing the level of independence children are expected to exhibit, decreasing the amount of assistance provided to children, varying the type of cues and instructions, and by varying the size of instructional groups.

Preschool program staff also are responsible for helping families prepare for transition. A first step in helping families may be to provide them with clear information about when the child will graduate from preschool and enter the kindergarten program. Information concerning the transition process, decisions to be made, and individuals who will be involved in transition should be given to families. Teachers also can help families adjust to the changes imposed by transition by acknowledging that transitions can be stressful and by telling families that it is common to experience stress and anxiety. Preschool staff also can help families during the transition process by allowing parents the option to participate in transition planning and child preparation activities.

• Preparation Within the Kindergarten Program

Teachers in the kindergarten program are largely responsible for preparing the classroom setting and educational curricula to accommodate the child with special needs. In addition, they must support existing child skills and strengths, and maintain and extend the training that occurred in preschool. In order to do this, teachers will need to learn about the child's handicapping condition or disability and methods to address limitations related to the disability. They also will need to learn about the child's strengths and needs and the specific academic and survival skills the child exhibits. Kindergarten teachers may need to teach academic and survival skills. They may also need to adjust academic, behavioral, and survival skills expectations, teaching style, and curricular materials to meet the variety of needs that children may exhibit.

Kindergarten teachers may assess the differences between programs by observing the child and the preschool program before the child enters kindergarten, or by exchanging information with the preschool teacher in order to plan for a child's entry into a mainstreamed kindergarten. Teachers may then work to minimize the differences across programs, build upon similarities between programs, and teach critical academic and survival skills. Teachers can minimize the differences between programs by using some of the materials, instructional methods, and behavior management techniques that were used in a child's preschool setting. They also might vary the type and number of cues and instructions provided children and vary the level of assistance, duration of activities, and size of instructional groups. They may teach new classroom rules and routines and survival skills through daily review and practice during the first few weeks of class.

Teachers in the kindergarten program also are responsible for helping the family adjust to the integrated program. They can help families by providing information about the new classroom such as common rules and behavior management techniques, daily routines, general descriptions about the other children in the class, and general expectations for children. In addition, teachers can include parents as important team members by asking them about child strengths and needs, favorite toys and activities, preferences for the level and type of involvement in their child's educational program, and priorities for child goals. Kindergarten teachers and parents also should discuss parent/teacher communication and establish a schedule and methods for sharing information (e.g. teachers and parents will share information through a daily notebook, parents may call after school hours each Friday).

One of the important tasks kindergarten teachers have is to prepare children within the integrated program to interact during social and academic activities. Simply placing typical children and children with disabilities in the same classroom does not guarantee that they will interact. Specific programming and classroom arrangements usually are needed to promote interaction between children. There are several strategies teachers may use to promote peer

Interaction, continued on next page

interaction. Teachers might pair children with disabilities and typical children during free play activities. They may discuss friendships and specific strategies children can use to initiate interactions. Teachers may incorporate cooperative goals during play and academic periods, use peer tutoring and buddy systems, prompt and reward positive peer interactions, and provide children with information about disabilities through discussion or simulation activities.

• Parents' Roles in Transition

Parents are critical to the success of transition to mainstreamed kindergarten programs. They tend to be an underutilized resource in transition planning. There are several ways that they can be involved in planning and preparing their child for transition. They can:

- Provide information about child strengths and needs across a variety of situations and settings.
- Assist in making decisions about program placement and initial program goals, and about goals and activities that will help prepare the child for transition to the integrated kindergarten.
- Teach transition-related goals at home. Parents might promote independence by asking the child to put toys away and care for personal belongings, and providing the child with opportunities to make decisions about clothes, toys, snacks, etc. during the day.
- Prepare the child for transition and provide experiences that will facilitate transition. Parents might arrange for the child to visit the new program and meet the teacher before school starts. Or they might talk with the child about the change in programs and help the child become excited and feel confident about going to kindergarten.
- Teach transition-related skills that are not easily taught in a classroom setting. Parents might show the child the school building, teach a child how to safely walk to school, or give the child experience riding a bus. They also might provide the child with opportunities to interact with typical peers by attending neighborhood or church play groups or day care programs.
- Provide continuity between programs. Family members may continue to work on transition-related goals if there is a break in service between preschool and kindergarten.
- Work with the child to promote maintenance of child strengths and generalization of skills across settings (e.g. home and school). Parents can talk to the child about the rules and routines used in the kindergarten program and incorporate these in home daily activities.

Participation as members of the transition team also can help parents prepare themselves for transition and reduce the stress the family may experience. Parents should be given information about the transition process, the kindergarten teacher and program, and options for participation as decision makers concerning placement and transition goals and strategies. It is important to recognize however, that families may vary in their ability and desire to be involved in planning for transition. As a result, parent involvement in transition planning and child preparation activities should be individualized to reflect a level and type of involvement selected by the family.

• Administrators' Roles in Transition

Administrative support is important to the overall success of transition. Administrators from each program must support the efforts of their staff to plan for transition. Administrators from the preschool and kindergarten programs should establish interagency transition agreements that identify the responsibilities of staff in each program, the lines of communication across programs, and that provide a timeline for the initiation and completion of tasks. They also must provide staff with time and resources to plan for transition and integration. For example, administrators may pay for substitute teachers so that teachers from the preschool and kindergarten programs can visit each other's classrooms. Or administrators may arrange for yearly inservice meetings across programs so that staff can share information about their programs. They also must recognize staff efforts related to transition. Staff commitment and support for transition reflects the support provided by and commitment of administrative personnel.

• Summary

Preparing children for the next educational environment and success in transition from one program to another are important goals of Early Childhood Special Education. Children who experience success in transition from a specialized preschool to an integrated kindergarten are more likely to remain in the integrated classroom and to benefit from the opportunities provided by a normalized environment. The success of a child's transition is related to many factors such as the child's level of functioning in academic and survival skills areas, expectations and demands of the integrated setting, preparation efforts within the preschool and kindergarten program, family involvement, and administrative guidance and support. The goal of smooth and successful transition can be realized if transitions are carefully planned and include participation by teachers and administrators from the preschool and kindergarten program and family members.

Contributed by Lynette K. Chandler, Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901.

Path, continued from page 1

While not an exhaustive list, attention to these components will assist in designing effective integrated options based on any model.

A model for integration must also be flexible. In particular, program directors and others are faced with questions like: How can models be adapted to serve different children in different types of integrated settings? What model best prepares students for successful placement in regular education kindergarten and grade school? And how can services be created or expanded in ways that meet the legal and programmatic requirements of diverse agencies? These questions present real challenges to professionals charged with program development and must be thoughtfully addressed.

While important, the development of an adaptable model is not enough. It is necessary to identify and overcome other barriers to integration, including:

- Philosophical differences among personnel and parents about the value of educational integration of children with special needs.
- Lack of support services in the mainstream to allow modification of curricula to meet individual needs.
- Lack of administrative support.
- Minimal involvement of general educators in the educational planning of intervention methods for children with special needs that are effective in larger groups.

Specific barriers to integration will vary by state, district, building, and child. For example, certification requirements in one state may not be considered a barrier in another state. Similarly, transportation may be a major obstacle for one child in a district and not a problem for other children. What is needed is a way for districts and teachers to evaluate policies, logistical arrangements, inservice training needs, or other barriers to integration, and develop appropriate approaches to respond to and alleviate these barriers. This explicit attention to program implementation is a new direction for model development activities.

Unfortunately, even with a commitment for high-quality, integrated programming for all children with disabilities, teachers, parents, administrators and others need effective strategies for producing integrated outcomes. Knowledge of effective programs is not sufficient; solid guidance is needed in the implementation of these programs. In fact, it appears that policy, not practice, may be the most significant limiting factor to increasing the variety of integrated programs for preschool children with disabilities. Individuals trying to create integrated options for preschoolers with disabilities often face questions about transportation, locations and licensure of physical plants, administrative organization of centers, staff qualifications and licensure, and assurances for program quality and due-process. It is clear that we must begin developing, implementing, and evaluating integrated early childhood special education programs that help people decide what to do and how to do it.

Despite the development and implementation of appropriate models for integration, the question remains: Is inclusion in a program that serves typically developing children the "least restrictive environment" for all young children with disabilities? Perhaps not. Obviously, each child's individual abilities and needs must be considered. Unfortunately, for many children with disabilities participation in an integrated program is often either dismissed immediately without opportunity for the child to even participate at some level in the classroom, or is attempted without appropriate support. In essence, the child is set up to fail. Inclusion does not mean that the child is merely placed in a classroom, but means that support for the placement (i.e. special education or related services assistance) is an integral and critical part of integration.

These issues are critical and additional research is needed to address them. In short, local school districts need well thought-out, realistic and proven systems for deciding what to do in integrated classroom programs for young children with disabilities, and how to do it. And, as importantly, they need to assure that every child has an opportunity to participate at some level in programs that serve children with and without disabilities.

In a presentation for the day care providers in southwest Louisiana in 1990*, Lisbeth Vincent noted that in the 1970's we developed a tolerance for persons with disabilities. Legislation, among other things, forced us as parents and professionals to consider ways to "include" young children with disabilities in our communities and schools. In the 1980's we began to accept children with disabilities and noted the benefits of including them in our programs. For example, we noted that typically developing children had more positive attitudes about persons with disabilities and that we no longer needed to teach children about individual differences through the use of puppets or simulations. These children had opportunities to learn about accepting differences by interacting with or observing children with disabilities in their classrooms, on their playgrounds, in their grocery stores, and so on. Dr. Vincent believes that in the 1990's we will learn to cherish persons with disabilities and learn from them as they learn from us. Clearly, including all children regardless of their individual differences in programs to meet their individual and unique needs is a goal that we all must cherish.

***Vincent, L. (January, 1990). "Working with Families of Children with Special Needs". Workshop presented at the Southwest Louisiana Education and Referral Center, Inc. Day Care Provider Conference. Lafayette, Louisiana.**

Contributed by Dr. Mary A. McEvoy, Assistant Professor, Carla Peterson, Doctoral Candidate, and Dr. Scott McConnell, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Minnesota.

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. . . and more.

IMPACT
Feature Issue on Inclusive Education
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Managing Editor: Vicki Gaylord
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Carla Peterson

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The Million Dollar Question...

by Terri Vandercook, Jennifer York, Mike Sharpe, John Knight, Christine Salisbury, Barbara LeRoy, and Elizabeth Kozleski

And now for one million dollars... your question is, "What impact will the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classes have on the academic performance of classmates without disabilities?" Seems like the response to this question must be worth at least a million dollars given the frequency and intensity with which it is asked by administrators, school board members, teachers, parents, and other members of the education community when the topic of inclusive education arises. Clearly implied with this question is the concern that the academic learning of the majority may be put at risk when students with disabilities, especially those with significant disabilities, are included in general education classes.

At Isanti Elementary School, in the Rum River Cooperative, kindergartners with diverse abilities share a computer activity. See page 3.

Some educators and parents, while philosophically *supportive* of inclusive education practices, have genuine concerns about potential adverse effects on classmates. Heightening these concerns are the recurring themes of academic excellence and higher achievement for today's youth. Certainly, parents and educators who are philosophically *opposed* to inclusive education practices raise these concerns with even greater vehemence, citing lack of empirical evidence as justification for their position.

Anecdotally, feedback from many general educators whose classrooms include students with severe disabilities has consistently indicated that no adverse effect on classmates has been realized. In fact, many of these teachers have been overwhemingly positive when asked, "Has inclusion had an effect on the academic performance of classmates?" A fifth grade teacher responded, "Yes, a positive impact. It's given them a responsibility and a sense of achievement being able to interact with Annie." And from a first grade teacher, "Inclusion has had an effect on the other children's academic learning by increasing awareness of their own capabilities and respect for themselves and others, which affects the learning climate and susceptibility to learning."

Although anecdotal feedback from teachers is one critically important source of information, research studies designed to address more empirically the question of the impact of inclusion on the learning of classmates clearly are warranted. In the past few years, a number of researchers have investigated precisely this question. Following are brief summaries of four studies.

■ Colorado: Inclusion in Third Grade

Elizabeth Kozleski and her colleagues at the University of Colorado examined the impact of the inclusion of Jane, a nine year old student with developmental disabilities, in her neighborhood school where she received a full day of educational programming in a third grade class. The academic progress of her classmates was compared to that of their cohorts in the school's two other third grade classrooms. The

Question, continued on page 20

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Toward a Shared Agenda for General and Special Education

by Jennifer York

Collaborating to support students with special education labels to be more fully included in school and community life is just one of the many challenging issues being faced by educators today. Achieving true collaboration among general and special educators necessarily will require mutual adoption of a much broader shared agenda. This shared agenda is responsibility for *all* students in our school communities. As general educators move to welcome and include in their classrooms students previously relegated to the second system of special education, special educators must move into the general education system to support teachers and all students, even those without special education labels. With the students reunited, the adults of the school community will need to move out of isolation and learn more collaborative ways of working together.

Even with strong collaborative relationships in place, however, the success achieved in moving forward with full inclusion of *all* students in one system of education will be influenced by a number of significant issues facing not only our school communities, but our local and global communities as well. Remaining cognizant of external influences on our system of education will be necessary in order to create an educational system that remains dynamic enough to meet the continually changing learning and social needs of today's youth in their school and community life. More than ever before, a strong internal structure of collaboration will be required to address the needs imposed by powerful external influences on our system of education.

■ External Influences

Some of the many external influences currently having a dramatic impact on our public system of education are: (1) an increasingly diverse general population resulting in a more heterogenous student population culturally, socially, emotionally, and academically; (2) increasingly complex and critical issues being faced by our local, national, and global communities; (3) an exponential increase in the amount of information available to humans; and (4) diminishing fiscal resources with increasing competition for the resources that do exist. Together, these influences provide a compelling basis for examining the educational implications of two pivotal questions: *What are the most essential skills for participation, contribution, and even survival in our current and future communities?, and How can acquisition and application of these skills best be facilitated in our public school systems?*

■ Educational Implications

There are at least three major implications resulting from the external influences on our systems of education: instructional priorities must be individualized to have relevance to the life of each student, all children and youth must learn the competencies necessary to be life-long collaborative learners, and our current system(s) of education must be restructured so that collaboration among all members of the school community is encouraged, facilitated, and reinforced.

• **Individualize instructional priorities**. To maximize personal motivation in the learning process, relevance of instructional priorities to each student's life must be made as clear as possible. There is no way that today's children and youth can learn all that is known in any given curricular area. Even if they could, the information soon would be outdated as new information is generated. As curricular content demands have escalated, teachers already have been faced with the need to make tough decisions about educational priorities. In most circumstances, individual teachers make these decisions on their own with little or no input or support from colleagues, families, community members, or students. Prioritizing curricular content must be legitimized and brought out in the open for discussion. Determining priorities will require a careful ecological analysis of individual student needs, including attention to capacities, challenges, and daily environmental demands and opportunities.

• **Promote life-long collaborative learning**. The proliferation of new knowledge and the complexity of community problems makes the promotion of life-long collaborative learning an essential focus in today's educational system. Students must learn how to quickly access information from other people, written materials and audio-visual media, and their own life experiences. From a young age, children must learn how to make use of the people resources around them. Children, like adults, learn and grow through their relationships with others. Traditional, teacher dominated methods of instruction must be exchanged for or at least complemented by methods that teach students to learn from one another and work together. If students are taught only what teachers know, their knowledge base as they move into the future will not be adequate. Students must learn how to learn and to generate new information to solve the complex problems that no one person can solve alone. Incumbent upon our survival will be working together to share information and resources... to be truly interdependent.

A more subtle, but equally essential, requisite for effectively addressing complex current and future issues is experience with the wide range of individuals reflective of the diversity in our communities at large. Not only is it impossible to eliminate the diversity in general education, but to do so can only disable, at least in the long run, children not considered disabled. How can our future decision-makers

make truly informed decisions with limited experiences to draw from? The potentially detrimental effects of continued attempts to segregate are perhaps most salient in urban school districts where children and youth with identified differences comprise over half the student population. As a human race, we must learn how to get along... how to live and learn more harmoniously in our families, our schools, our local communities, and our world communities.

• **Restructure systems of support**. The collection of initiatives broadly labeled *school reform* has been replaced with the language of *school restructuring* to reflect more accurately the enormity of the change needed in our public system of education. Given, at best, maintenance of the same level of fiscal and personnel resources, we must do something different with our existing resources. Simply, there are two options. One is to continue to support a system of education in which children are separated and served by either general education or special education, where people work in isolation and in which rigid bureaucratic structures inhibit use of common sense and creativity. The other option is to work together to build capacity in one system of education, general education, to support the diverse learning and social needs of all students. The choice must be to work together to build capacity in one system of education.

In most schools, classroom teachers struggle in isolation trying to meet increasingly diverse student needs. Special educators and related services personnel remove children from regular learning environments to remediate fragmented skill deficits. Only in rare circumstances are the structures in place that facilitate, encourage, and support collaboration among teachers and other service providers to share responsibility and resources to solve the complex problems experienced by today's youth. If we do not restructure our educational system so that all members of the school community -- adults and children -- work together, the resources for change will not be realized.

■ Final Thoughts

As the student population in inclusive school communities becomes more heterogenous, ways of providing support necessarily must evolve to meet increasingly diverse learning and social needs. As the issues facing our public system of education become more complex, collaboration will be even more essential. Many of the recent education reform and school restructuring initiatives are aimed at developing capacity through increased collaboration at the school building level. This reflects a shift to empower the people closest to students, as well as the students themselves, to make decisions given individual school and student circumstances. The move toward empowerment carries with it a risk that team members will decide to maintain the status quo and to exclude students who experience the greatest challenges. To minimize that risk, we must promote an understanding that exclusion of any student ultimately will harm not only that student, but the rest of our community as well. In the transition to decision-making at levels closest to students, a balance between leadership and participation must be achieved. Decisions must be made from an acceptable array of choices. Perhaps the best safeguard against any one individual not acting in a student's best interest is the collaborative team structure that results in a number of individuals keeping watch over each student.

Jennifer York is Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology/Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota.

At Onamia Elementary School, in the Rum River Cooperative, students with diverse abilities learn together.

Movement Toward a Shared Agenda

Decentralization of learners with special education labels has increased the need for a shared agenda between general and special educators. The role and function of special education is changing dramatically. One agency, the Rum River Special Education Cooperative, reflects this change in its new mission:

> *The Rum River Special Education Cooperative, through creative use of resources, will assist our schools and communities to provide for the successful inclusion of students, especially those with challenges. We will accomplish this through partnerships with members of our local school communities, site-based communication, technical assistance, and training.*

For more information contact Mark Wolak, Director, or Nancy Corbin, Inclusion Facilitator, Rum River Special Education Cooperative, 430 NW 8th St., Cambridge, MN 55008.

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America 2000: A Revolution in American Education

by Anne Smith, Dawn Hunter, and Judy Schrag

AMERICA 2000 embraces school reform and is designed to catapult educational systems change across the nation. According to President Bush, "Our challenge amounts to nothing less than a revolution in American education. A battle for our future." The opening pages of *AMERICA 2000: An Education Strategy Sourcebook* include the following statement by President Bush:

> *Nations that nurture ideas will move forward in years to come. Nations that stick to stale old notions and ideologies will falter and fail. So I'm here today to say, America will move forward. The time for all the reports and rankings, for all the studies and the surveys about what's wrong in our schools is passed. If we want to keep America competitive in the coming century, we must stop convening panels that report on ourselves. We must stop convening panels that report the obvious. And we must accept responsibility for educating everyone among us, regardless of background or disability.*

The AMERICA 2000 initiative recognizes that the United States is becoming increasingly culturally diverse and is competing economically within a global marketplace. Schools must prepare our children to function effectively in this challenging and changing world by providing numerous opportunities to experience diversity and inclusion during their school careers. Students with disabilities add to the diversity of the school community and can teach their nondisabled peers important lessons about equity and social justice, cooperation and collaboration, overcoming obstacles, and the dignity of the human spirit. Providing educational services for all students that balance social and academic inclusion with outcomes-based and functional curricula will require significant change from both general and special education.

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) will continue to play a strong leadership role in promoting opportunities for individuals with disabilities. In concert with the AMERICA 2000 education strategy, OSERS has identified at least four initiatives to guide program activities and priorities: (a) early intervention services, (b) inclusion, (c) family support, and (d) empowerment (OSERS News Update, 1991). This article focuses on the OSERS inclusion initiative by describing key program features and practices identified by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to promote inclusion for students with disabilities in AMERICA 2000 schools.

As part of the AMERICA 2000 initiative, OSEP has identified four key program features of inclusive education to increase school capacity and ensure comprehensive, coordinated services for all students, including those with severe disabilities. Each program feature is accompanied by selected promising practices that articulate implementation strategies to foster inclusive school communities. These key program features and related practices are:

Program Feature 1: All students, including those with disabilities, are a valued part of the school community and contribute unique talents and perspectives to the school. All students must be ensured equal opportunities to access activities, materials, equipment, and classrooms throughout the entire school building.

- Practice 1: Local education agencies use site-based planning and management to promote inclusive educational programs through the adoption of building-based policies and mission statements related to inclusion. Instructional and management policies and procedures are established and can be quickly implemented when required.
- Practice 2: Staff development and capacity building activities are key features of ongoing school improvement efforts at both the building and district level. The school schedule is designed to provide opportunities for lesson planning, co-curricular activities, team teaching, and materials development.
- Practice 3: All school personnel serve as role models for students and are important players in promoting the inclusion of all students throughout the building. Personnel involved with building maintenance, food service, office support, and transportation must be involved in ensuring that all students are full members of the school community.

Program Feature 2: All students, including those with disabilities, must have the interpersonal and social skills required to work cooperatively with peers to solve problems and accomplish goals. Friendships and social networks are important elements of the educational experience.

- Practice 1: Schools provide opportunities for students to have shared experiences by offering extra-curricular activities to promote a sense of belonging and to teach students how to relate to and communicate with peers.
- Practice 2: Peer advocate and peer tutoring programs are examples of educational strategies that equip students with skills involving empathy and problem solving, and that foster mutual understanding and respect.
- Practice 3: School programs promote social supports and friendships among students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers. Strategies include forming circles of friends and recruiting intact student cliques to form social networks.

Program Feature 3: All students, including those with disabilities, must be self-directed learners. Instructional technology and classroom management strategies must be capable of accommodating and supporting students with diverse learning styles and varying educational needs.

- Practice 1: School personnel collaborate with their colleagues to determine how to best provide dynamic and flexible instruction. Effective strategies include cooperative learning, team teaching, consultant teaching and mentoring, cross-age grouping programs, and using peers as instructional supports. Inclusive schools promote a collaborative ethic to ensure adequate staff support.

- Practice 2: Schools employ a coordinated service delivery model in which teachers, parents, and related services personnel (e.g., psychologists, communication specialists, occupational and physical therapists, health care professionals) work collaboratively to determine student needs and provide appropriate interventions in naturally occurring contexts.

- Practice 3: Inclusive school programs have an array of support services in place to ensure success for all students. The supports are varied and may include assistance from classroom teaching assistants or peers, curricular modifications, adapted materials, or assistive technology. Students are provided supports when necessary and are encouraged to take an active learning role by directing the type and amount of support they receive.

Program Feature 4: All parents, including those of children with disabilities, are actively involved in their child's education and are an integral part of the school community.

- Practice 1: Parents are viewed as active and interested partners in the development and implementation of their child's individualized education program (IEP).

- Practice 2: Parents are involved with the planning and adoption of policies and procedures for inclusionary school practices.

- Practice 3: Schools are respectful of parental work and child care obligations when scheduling meetings and activities, and are flexible in accommodating parents.

As we move into the 1990s there are urgent calls for radical school restructuring and educational reform at the Federal, State, and local levels. The challenge of school reform drives the need for strategies to restructure or "stretch the system" to ensure that educators accommodate students with diverse learning characteristics and cultural backgrounds. President Bush invited us to adopt this spirit of innovation by stating, "Across this country, people have started to transform American schools. They know that the time for talk is over. Their slogan is: Don't dither, just do it. Let's push the reform effort forward." The collaborative ethic inherent in inclusive school communities holds the promise of empowering students, parents, and school personnel to attain positive outcomes for all.

Anne Smith is Educational Research Analyst, Severely Handicapped Branch, and Dawn Hunter is Chief of the Severely Handicapped Branch, Office of Special Education Programs. Judy Schrag is Director, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education.

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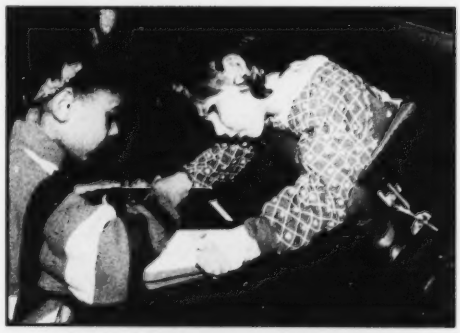
One District's Transformation



Jaime (right) and Kesiah share an activity in their Scandia Elementary kindergarten.

The Forest Lake (Minnesota) Area School District is working to help students with diverse ability levels truly achieve membership in their home school communities. Under a three year grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), the district is collaborating with the University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration to return elementary students with moderate and severe disabilities to the schools and general education classes that they would attend if they did not have disabilities. During the first year of the project, which began in September 1990, one elementary school in the district developed and implemented a plan to bring several children with disabilities back into their local school. In the second and third years of the project other district elementary schools will follow a similar plan, moving toward the goal of the full inclusion of students with disabilities into each of the district's seven elementary schools. Through collaboration between project staff, parents of students with and without disabilities, students, and school personnel, strategies are being developed to provide quality educational services to all district children in their home schools and general education classes.

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Step by Step: A System's Evolution Toward Inclusion

by Richard Schattman

The Franklin Northwest Supervisory Union (FNWSU) is a collection of five independent school districts in rural northwestern Vermont. The union's evolution from a dual system of categorical and segregated special and regular education services to a single "full inclusion" model was not an isolated change originated, directed, or orchestrated from within special education. Rather, it was a gradual cultural evolution of related community, school, and personal attitudes that took on a life of its own.

There still is, in the special education literature, controversy over the value of such inclusive educational practices. Some authors feel that the protection and improvement of the current dual system of regular and special education is justified; others advocate creating a single system out of the current dual systems of regular and special education. Even among those who advocate for including students with special educational needs in general education, there are few who extend the concept to students with severe and multiple needs. The value of looking at the FNWSU experience lies not in an analysis of its current practices of "full inclusion," but in an examination of how and why this union of schools changed so that all students (including those with the most significant educational, psychological, and behavioral challenges) received a quality, integrated education. The focus of this article is an examination of factors that contributed to a school system's evolution to an inclusionary model for all children and how that system's change in special education was inextricably linked to broader issues of school reform.

[We] believe that all children can learn that which is considered important for them to learn, given appropriate support, resources, and time.

■ Mission vs Practice

There is little doubt that the traditions of segregated special education area programs would have persisted had FNWSU school personnel not decided to consider the notions of outcomes-based instruction. While the tenants of outcomes-based instructional models address the needs of students with varying abilities within regular education classes, the literature of outcomes-based instruction in general did not address the needs of students served within isolated special education classrooms. Although it is now clear to us that most classroom-based instructional strategies appropriate for students without disabilities also are appropriate for students identified as "handicapped", such a strong connection had not been made in the literature of the day. Consequently, in 1982, when FNWSU schools first considered the adoption of an outcomes-based approach, they did not consider its application to populations with disabilities.

In 1983, a new FNWSU mission statement emerged from discussions among parents, teachers, administrators, board members, and civic groups. It stated:

> *The schools of the Franklin Northwest Supervisory Union believe that all children can learn that which is considered important for them to learn, given appropriate support, resources, and time.*

Subsequent compatible mission statements were developed in each of the five districts of the FNWSU.

The FNWSU and individual school district mission statements served a number of purposes. First, they helped communities to define their purpose in terms that spoke to the needs of not just some, but all children. Second, in formulating the mission statements, professionals and community members had the opportunity to dialogue together about beliefs and possible goals. Third, the mission statements provided a "standard" with which discrete educational practices could be evaluated.

Incongruities between the mission and practice emerged and many of our practices were challenged including ability "tracking" at the secondary level and "readiness" first grades. The most striking incongruity was our practice of segregating students based on the type and severity of their disabilities or educational challenges. If we truly believed in our mission statement — that all children could learn given appropriate time and resources — how could we justify sorting out some students and sending them away to segregated area programs rather than educating them in age-appropriate classes of their neighborhood schools?

Initially, the discussions regarding our segregation practices were somewhat academic and abstract. However, the discussions became concrete as we examined the effects of segregation in relationship to the attainment of our stated "desired student outcomes" for all children, which included:

- **Outcome 1: Development of a good self concept**. As a result of participating in Franklin NW schools all students will feel competent and positive about themselves as learners. The process of education should enhance not diminish one's feeling of self worth.

- **Outcome 2: Development of appropriate social skills.** As a result of participating in Franklin NW schools all students will develop the necessary social skills which will enable them to participate fully in school, work, and home life.

- **Outcome 3: Development of higher level cognitive skills**. As a result of participating in Franklin NW schools all students will learn well, progress in the curriculum to the greatest extent possible, and learn to be independent, self-directed learners.

Through our self-examination we discovered a number of disturbing things. First we saw the children who attended the regional programs climb on the same school bus as their neighborhood peers and siblings each morning, disembark at the neighborhood school, and wait in a "special" section of the playground until the "special" bus took them away to their out-of-district program. Once on the special bus, they traveled up to 45 minutes with other children deemed appropriate for segregation to a school for the children of a community other than their own. We decided to ask children attending regional programs and their siblings how they felt about this routine. Consistently, they responded that it was diminishing, humiliating, and embarrassing. Clearly, this practice violated our first student outcome that schools should enhance children's feelings of self-worth.

A more in depth look into the regional classes revealed that some "mainstreaming" opportunities were provided for the students attending the area classes. However, they were minimal, and they were not with children from the students' home schools and communities. Consequently, the primary models of age-appropriate social skills for students in the regional classes were the adult special education staff and other children with disabilities in the room. Thus, FNWSU's segregation of students with disabilities effectively denied them opportunities to achieve our second desired student outcome of social skill development.

... for a group of our children with disabilities, the practices we employed clearly violated our stated mission.

Finally, our practice of segregation was viewed in relationship to our third stated desired outcome of developing higher level cognitive skills. Special classes had the capacity to employ special techniques to teach specific skills. Unfortunately, our review of the literature led us to believe that the specialized capacity of segregated programs, in fact, had negative effects on students. Specifically, the teacher-directed instructional methods commonly employed in special classes encouraged student dependence on others (i.e. the teachers and paraprofessionals) rather than the development of self-directed, independent learning, and higher level reasoning and problem-solving skills. This issue became alarming to us when we began to consider how the dependent relationship fostered in a segregated model might contribute to a life-long pattern of dependence.

■ Shifting Toward Inclusion

This self-examination process caused the FNWSU community to conclude that, for a group of our children with disabilities, the practices we employed clearly violated our stated mission. We were faced with three options. We could modify our philosophy and mission so it did not address *all* children, we could learn to live with and ignore the discrepancy between our values and practices, or we could change our practices. The majority of teachers, administrators, and community members who pondered this dilemma decided to initiate a planning process that hopefully would facilitate a change in practices so that students currently segregated could be educated in a manner consistent with our stated mission and philosophy.

The shift toward more inclusive educational practices within FNWSU were stimulated by the development of mission and outcome statements and changes initiated in general rather than special education (i.e., the adoption of an outcomes-based model of instruction). However, other factors facilitated the system's change, namely a) the access to knowledge and technical assistance, b) advocacy for State funding changes to support inclusive educational practices, c) our actual learning experiences in bringing children back to their home schools and classes, and d) the adoption of collaborative teaming practices among school personnel.

There have been a great number of important lessons learned as a result of having created a "fully inclusive system." The most important for me are the following three:

- **You are never really there**. While the FNWSU schools represent some of the earliest and finest examples of inclusive education, there continues to be a need for growth and improvement. It takes continued staff development, openness to and exploration of new ideas and methods, and a constant renewal of the belief that it is vitally important for all children to live and learn together.

- **Teaming is the key**. When a planning team is working well it can address virtually any issue. I have visited and studied programs throughout the United States and Canada committed to the provision of fully inclusive education, and the one common denominator is they all use teams for planning, problem solving, and program implementation. It is the configuration of a team, with its diverse representation of perspectives and multiple sources of creativity, which allows us to deal with the diversity and complexity of the needs represented in classes that include all children.

Evolution, continued on page 21

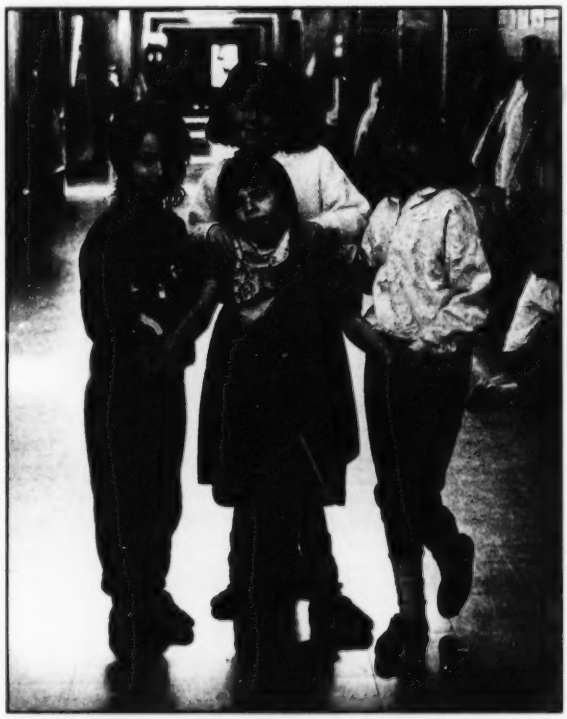
The Power of One

by Terri Vandercook

Dear Friend,
Thank you for helping me in my life and for comforting my family in my death. Remember what I have taught you. I love you.

Good Bye,
Catherine

The above was a note received by some of Catherine's closest friends after her death on December 15, 1989. Catherine may have touched your life previously through *Cath, Jess, Jules, and Ames...A Story of Friendship* featured in the Fall 1988 IMPACT, or through *The McGill Action Planning System (MAPS): A Strategy for Building the Vision* which highlighted Catherine's MAPS session and was published in the Fall 1989 issue of JASH. This article, *The Power of One*, provides yet another demonstration of how this one small ten year old girl has exerted great power and influence over so many people. It is a tribute and thank you to Catherine, as well as a reminder and challenge to all of us that as individuals, each of us has the power to make a positive difference in our world.



Catherine (center) with her best friends at Battle Creek Elementary School, Jessica, Julie, and Amy.

I first met Catherine when her team was working to more fully include her as a member of a third grade class in the school she attended. The team's approach had been primarily what has been referred to as "the teacher deals approach", i.e., establishing a relationship with classroom teachers and striking deals to gain access to general education classrooms and activities for a child with disabilities. Toward the end of that school year, Catherine's team made a decision to use the MAPS process to more systematically increase her involvement in the third grade classroom. The MAPS planning provided a very hopeful and positive beginning, but following that initial planning and subsequent implementation, the expectations and vision of Catherine's team greatly expanded. The majority of Catherine's team members concurred that her needs were not being most appropriately met by a model of "partial" membership in the general education classroom. The memory of Diane, Catherine's mom, placing a copy of Bob Perske's *Circle of Friends* book in the center of the table and quietly saying, "This is what Catherine needs and what I want most for her" remains very vivid in my mind.

On September 4, 1989, Catherine began life as a fourth grader at Cherokee Heights Elementary School in St. Paul, Minnesota (you could see the school's flagpole from her bedroom window). On December 15, 1989 she left this world as we know it.

The rest of this story illustrates how in four short months, Catherine deeply touched the lives of many children and adults in her new school community. Following are excerpts from letters that Catherine's classmates wrote to her on the day that she died, as well as a note to Catherine's family from the parent of one of her classmates and from her teacher:

- *"I think you should know that I am so sad that you left me and the class."* -- Chris
- *"I did not want to end this right at this moment. I feel terrible and all of us are sad. It will not be the same without you."* -- Derek
- *"We are all going to miss you. You touched our lives and we touched your life."* -- Chris
- *"You meant a lot to me and all the kids in this class. Some of the kids let out their feelings by crying. We all will miss you."* -- Amanda

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- *"I miss you very much. I'm in grief with others in my class. You will be remembered always in my heart. You will be remembered always. I cared about you a lot in my heart."* -- Jolene
- *"We really loved you and we wish you were still here with us today. I hope you could just come back with a snap of someone's fingers."* -- David
- *"You meant a lot to me and I'm grateful to you. I really love you. I'm glad you had the chance to be with us. We are all going to miss you but most of all I will. I liked to see you rocking in your chair listening to Anne Murray. I love you!!"* -- Sara
- *"On the first day of school I saw you and thought you were really pretty. I was hoping you were gonna be in my class. Today's been one of the saddest days of my life."* -- Heather
- *"I bet everyone liked you in 4th, 5th, and 6th grade. I bet if everyone met you they would like you too. I'm sorry that you died. You were a sweet girl, you never bothered anyone. I will always remember you Catherine, you gave me something to think about. I really, really miss you Catherine. I don't know how you got Rett syndrome, but I sure wanted you to get better."* -- Amanda
- *"We really miss you and hope you're back. We liked you to be with us. We're going to miss you. Everybody wants you to be back. You make us happy. Our life is empty without you in your chair at school."* -- Samol
- *"We care so much about you. I hope you had a good time with us. Cause I had the time of my life with you."* -- Sherrie
- *"We will miss you a lot and we all have sadness for you because we had the friendship and we all love you and we wish you were back again."* -- Hun
- *"I wish you were still here cause now I can't see a nice person like you in the morning cause when I saw you I'd smile. But now I can't. Catherine is a shining rose, looks as pretty as a rose and smells like one too and always will."* -- Elizabeth
- *"Everyone is crying and saying things won't be the same with you gone. We won't be the same. You gave us a lot. You gave us respect for handicapped people, love for others, and showing people you don't need words to make friends."* -- Karen

And from the parent of one of Catherine's classmates:

- *"Everyday if Jolene were to tell me a story about school, it was about Catherine. She said, "Mom, everybody loves Catherine." I cannot tell you about any of the other kids in Jolene and Catherine's class. Jolene only spoke of Catherine. On Friday Jolene told me her last Catherine story. While I only met your daughter once, I felt I knew her well. Jolene's class was truly special and chosen to have Catherine. Jolene and her class gained a great deal from Catherine. You had a truly special child. She will be greatly missed."* -- Jill

And, lastly, from Catherine's fourth grade teacher:

- *"If the worth of a person's life is judged by the affect they had on others, Catherine's presence will be felt for a lifetime in the hearts of many people. I speak not only for me but all the children she came in contact with. She fostered a deep caring and love, but maybe a longer lasting affect will be the understanding and compassion in the hearts and minds of everyone who came in contact with her. She, more than any other student I've ever had, belonged to not just you alone, but to everyone who came in contact with her and who loved her."* -- Gwen

Illustrated here is "the power of the powerless." Catherine did not possess power in the traditional sense of the word, but it cannot be denied that she had a positive and powerful influence over those who knew her. There is a lot of discussion in the educational community these days about outcome-based education. One of the seven outcomes specified in Minnesota's proposed outcome-based graduation rule is "to understand diversity and the interdependence of people." Listen again to the things that Karen credited Catherine with having given to her classmates; "respect for handicapped people, love for others, and showing you don't need words to make friends." Those words indicate more than an *understanding* of diversity and interdependence. To me, they demonstrate a *celebration* of diversity and interdependence! There will be some graduation outcomes that can be learned from a book, there will be others that must be experienced. Those who shared school life with Catherine experienced an educational opportunity as of yet not available to all.

Dear Catherine,

Thank you for helping me in my life. You provided such a joyous and hopeful vision of children learning together. You asked me not to forget what you taught me. Don't worry little friend, the lessons you taught were very powerful. I'll not forget! I love you.

Good Bye,
Terri

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Plungers, Followers, Joiners, and Wailers: A Lesson from Nature

by Terri Vandercook, Charlene Bell, and Jennifer York

Change is a constant, a fact of life that most of us wish were not true. The status quo is so comfortable, something we know and have learned to handle - both the positive and the negative aspects. Change introduces the unknown, it is unsettling and involves taking risks. Given a choice, most of us will choose, either consciously or unconsciously, the status quo. Frequently, there is no real choice about whether or not to change. There are *always* choices, however, about how to engage in and respond to change.

Inclusive school communities welcome and support the belonging, participation, and learning of all children in the school they would attend if they did not have a disability label, as members of general education classrooms with their same age peers and as full participants in school life. The concept of inclusion embraces all children, including those with the most severe disabilities. Adherence to the philosophy does not deny that many children have unique needs and will require extra support, but encourages educators and family members to work together to provide that extra support in typical school and community environments, rather than in separate places. As you might well imagine and as many of you are painfully aware, a change in educational philosophy and service provision of this magnitude creates more than a bit of high anxiety! The story of a colony of young penguins who were faced with a large change in the way they were used to living is used to illustrate the varied reactions that penguins, and people, may exhibit when confronted with change.

Thirty little penguins began their lives being pretty much equal to each other, certainly they all dressed alike. And they experienced similar childhoods. They lived in the shadow of a towering ice wall, quite a distance from the waters. All their food was supplied to them by their parents with clock-like regularity. Being so protected and fed, they had plenty of time for play and exploration. The little penguins enjoyed life and felt quite secure.

One day the parents of the little penguins realized that to continue to feed, protect, and shelter their children from life was to do them an injustice. The parents went off, as always, to search for food. But on this particular day they did not return. This marked the beginning of transferring responsibility for life from the parents to the little penguins.

The 30 little penguins in the colony had not anticipated such a life altering event and certainly had not been prepared for it. They paced up and down the beach, looking off in the direction taken by their parents. They continued to await the arrival of their food. After all, life had been quite predictable up until this point. It was difficult for the little penguins to get on with anything constructive . They stared into the distance, waiting for life in its familiar form.

This is true for all of us when life changes. Whether it's a sudden trauma or an anticipated change, there is always a period of grieving for what was, a time of denial and anxiety before attempting to move on. Interestingly, not all of the 30 penguins reacted in exactly the same way. Some became plungers. Others were definitely followers. Some became joiners, while others just wailed. Sound familiar? Let's take a closer look.

■ The Plungers

As the little penguins continued their pacing, four of them finally decided to take some action. These four separated themselves from the others, never looking back. They waddled off toward the towering wall. After scrambling to the top where they'd never ventured before, they plunged enthusiastically into the water! After the plunge into the water, these four leaders found that, lo and behold, they could swim! In the unfamiliar waters, they also discovered all the food they would ever need for the rest of their lives.

We are likely to see the same results in any group of 30 people faced with change. There are about four who grasp the reins of leadership and move forward into the future. The four plungers exhibit many of the characteristics we associate with leaders. When faced with change, they move forward because they:

...have a vision and choose to take action. In the videotape, *Discovering the Future: The Power of Vision*, Joel Arthur Barker discusses and illustrates how a positive vision of the future is essential for providing meaning and direction to the present, empowering us to solve problems and accomplish goals. Barker states that "Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world." The plungers believe it can be done! They are the individuals Margaret Mead referred to when she said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world, indeed it's the only thing that ever has."

...are willing to take risks. The plungers understand that growth involves risk. They acknowledge their fear and anxiety regarding change but are able to move beyond that fear, to engage in a plan of action intended to move them toward their vision.

...focus on solutions and not on problems. Our thoughts are powerful, what we think about is brought about. There are only two attitudes to choose from. One is negative. The other positive. Everyday we make a decision about the attitude on which our minds will focus. Plungers develop a

vision, they live it, they see it, they expect to make it happen!

...have the enthusiasm and energy needed to move forward. Each of us can have a powerful influence on others in either a positive or negative manner. Plungers tend to emanate positive vim and vigor. Their spirit is not dampened by phrases such as; "It won't work!", "We tried that 10 years ago", or "It costs too much money!".

...have an awareness that their security is internal, not external. True security comes from within, knowing who you are, where you are going, and why. This awareness allows individuals to release any attachment which might impede forward progress.

■ The Followers

The remaining 26 penguins were still pacing on the beach and getting hungrier and hungrier by the minute. Soon six of the remaining 26 pulled away from the group. As they cautiously moved away, looking back to what they were leaving behind, these followers responded to that spirit in their little bodies that propelled them forward. They too approached the wall and scrambled to the top, although a little less assuredly than the plungers. As they stood at the top huddled together, they looked forward in hopes of seeing the plungers, then they covered their eyes not wanting to see what they were about to do. Instead of plunging into the water with the enthusiasm of the first four, they merely leaned forward and allowed themselves to fall. Soon after entering the water, they, too, found food and discovered that they could swim.

In the group of 30 penguins, there were four plungers and six followers. Again, not dissimilar to what would most likely happen within any group of 30 human beings. Thankfully, there are always those who follow in the path of others who blazed a trail before them. Followers are not risk-takers to the same degree as plungers. They need to be more certain that things will turn out okay. Followers are essential, however, to operationalizing the vision. They can concentrate on the necessary tasks before them and often have the commitment and skill necessary to realize the vision. These followers are the so called "worker bees," the unsung heroes, little would be accomplished without them.

So, 10 of the 30 penguins chose to take action as plungers or followers. They chose to get on with their lives, instead of spending time waiting for things to get back to the way they were.

■ The Joiners

Finally, nine more penguins left the ranks. As they moved away, they walked backwards, afraid to lose sight of what they were leaving behind. In doing so they became confused, having no clear sense of direction , waivering between joining the first 10 and remaining behind. A few spoke up and said; "We have a big problem. I think we need to form a committee to discuss our situation." There are a great many penguins who just love to talk about problems. Amazingly enough, this penguin committee of joiners did arrive at two unanimous decisions. First, it was decided that none of the penguins would go over the wall. After all, they had not seen hide nor hair of the first 10 who had taken that route. Therefore, they must be dead! The second decision was that they would only undertake that which they could see was safe. So this group of penguins trudged over to a nearby pond. As they reached the pond, they tentatively wiggled their little feet into the water. Once assured that it was safe, they eased their bodies into the pond. This group likes to play it safe.

These penguins must *see it* to believe it, or *hear it* from the top. They want assurances and guarantees. These individuals (as the name implies) like to be part of a group and desire personal attention. Their attention-seeking focuses on efforts to support the status quo and undermine new ways of thinking or conducting business. They operate under the illusion that if they hang on long enough and don't risk too much, things will eventually return to the way they were.

■ The Wailers

Now there are still 11 penguins left on the beach. It seemed likely they would starve to death, because by this time they were mighty hungry and disgruntled. They never really joined forces or banded together. Instead, they wandered aimlessly around in isolation, waiting for something, anything, to come along and rescue them. Lo and behold, something did come and rescue them! The tide came in and washed these penguins into the water. They never really had to do anything to find food. They simpy waited for the tide to come in!

You would think these penguins would be ecstatic to find their problem solved with no effort on their part. Opportunity for good in life came to these penguins through no fault of their own. But no! Once in the water, these penguins did not pursue food. In fact they turned their bodies toward shore and scrambled back to land. They stood on the beach, glaring at the water and expounding their plight. "The tide was four days late. Where was it anyway? Heck, it took us where we didn't want to go in the first place." Well, if we don't want this to happen again without our permission, then we'd better get organized. We need to protect ourselves." As a result, these little wailer penguins organized themselves in order to protect themselves from the inevitable tides. They wished to maintain the status quo and protect themselves from the very thing which fed them!

The wailers are a group that spend a lot of time wondering what happened. They often want little, if any, ownership in the process of change and feel victimized by the decisions of others. They wait until after a direction has been

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Interpersonal Skills for Effective Collaboration

by Jacqueline Thousand and Richard Villa

Within the school restructuring movement, collaborative teams and teaming processes have come to be viewed as vehicles for inventing the solutions which traditional bureaucratic school structures have failed to conceptualize. Collaborative team structures bring together people of diverse backgrounds and interests so they may share knowledge and skills to generate new methods for individualizing learning, without the need for the current dual systems of general and special education.

It is not enough to merely assemble a group of individuals to form a collaborative team. For a collaborative team to function effectively, members must know and use small group interpersonal skills that facilitate collaboration. Of course, people are not born with group interaction skills, nor do these skills magically appear when needed. Additionally, few adults have had the opportunity to receive the kind of instruction and practice in small group interpersonal skills that many of our children and young adults now receive in schools and colleges in which cooperative group learning and partner learning structures are routinely employed (Villa & Thousand, 1992). As a consequence, many newly formed school-based collaborative teams will include individuals who have never been required to work as part of a team, and, therefore, lack the collaborative skills to do so.

The good news is that collaborative skills can be learned, and that learning how to collaborate is not much different from learning how to play a game, or ride a bicycle built for two. The team creates opportunities for members to see the need for the skills, learn how and when the skills should be used, practice the use of the skills, and discuss how well they are using the skills (Johnson, Johnson, Holubec, & Roy, 1984).

■ Determining Needed Collaborative Skills

Interpersonal skills in trust building, communication, leadership, creative problem solving, decision making, and conflict management have been identified as important to the success of collaborative team efforts. Four levels of social skills that team members use at various stages of group development (Johnson et al., 1984) are:

- **Forming**: initial trust building skills needed to establish a collaborative team.
- **Functioning**: communication and leadership skills that help manage and organize team activities so that tasks are completed and relationships are maintained.
- **Formulating**: skills needed to stimulate creative problem solving and decision making, and to create deeper comprehension of unfamiliar information.
- **Fermenting**: skills needed to manage controversy and conflict of opinions, search for more information (e.g., obtain technical assistance), and stimulate revision and refinement of solutions.

Individuals on a collaborative team will be at a variety of different levels in their collaborative skills. However, it can be expected that in the beginning, newly established teams will need to focus on the *forming* skills, which (a) build trust and facilitate members' willingness to share their ideas, resources, and feelings and (b) ensure that team members are present and oriented to working together.

As the team continues to meet, members will need to practice their *functioning* skills. The most effective communication and leadership behaviors at this juncture are those that help team members to send and receive information, to stay "on task", to discover effective and efficient work procedures, to create a pleasant and friendly work atmosphere, and to encourage team members to assume individual responsiblity for effective team work rather than expecting someone else (e.g., the principal, the specialist) to do it.

The *formulating* skills allow for high quality products and productivity. Teams will want to explore and receive training in specific models or methods of decision making and problem solving such as brainstorming (Osborn, 1963) and Parnes' (1988) creative problem-solving process.

Performance of *fermenting* skills is evidence that collaborative team members have succeeded in recognizing controversy and conflict as opportunities to uncover divergent perspectives for the purpose of creating new solutions. The competence and confidence of individual team members in handling conflicts increases as a function of a positive attitude toward and an appreciation for differences of opinion within the team.

■ Structuring the Practice of Collaborative Skills

Knowing what a particular collaborative skill looks and sounds like and why it is important in no way guarantees that members will know how to or choose to practice and subsequently master the skill. Three assumptions relate to the practice of interpersonal skills within teams. The first assumption is that other team members are critical to skill development. Their support and feedback determine whether skills are practiced correctly and often enough to be performed naturally and automatically. The second assumption is that peer pressure from team members and administrators to practice collaborative skills must be balanced with support for actually doing so. When unskilled team members (e.g., a dominant person, a person afraid of speaking, a person who

fails to carry out homework, a person who fails to understand ideas) are present, other team members are responsible for communicating both "We want you to practice this specific collaborative skill" and "How can we help you?" Conversely, each team member must learn how to identify and ask for support in practicing collaborative skills. A final assumption is that there is a direct relationship between the frequency of collaborative interactions and the number of team members with highly developed interpersonal competence. Further, the more skilled the team members, the more productive and fun team meetings will be.

In effective teams, members talk about and understand their norms, the group's common beliefs about appropriate behavior for members. They structure time to agree upon a written list of group norms or rules and discuss how, when, and why they should be applied. During the discussion, the team should not only identify desired behavior, but define and offer examples of the behaviors and share reasons why these behaviors are so important to their group's functioning. Norms are important to groups because they help to equalize the influence among group members. Both timid and powerful members gain from setting mutually agreed-upon norms because they bring regularity and control into the group without any one person having to apply personal power to direct interpersonal interactions. Some typical norms include: "Everyone on the team should participate", "We should start and end meetings on time", "We should use first names when addressing one another", and "We should not use foul language."

When a team member's behavior becomes incessant and distracting to the group, direct confrontation should be initiated. If it is judged that the individual who is going to receive the negative feedback will positively respond, any team member may initiate the feedback process. If, however, it is judged that the individual will be embarrassed or angered, or that the feedback will escalate the behavior, a supervisor or a team member who has a positive relationship with the person should offer the feedback privately.

There are several ways team members and administrators can encourage the practice of interpersonal skills and norms. First, all members can and should try to model desired social skills. Second, any team member may stop the group at any time to describe a needed behavior and ask the team members to perform it. For example, a member might say, "There seems to be a lot of interrupting. I think we need to slow down and listen more closely to what each of us has to say. How about if we observe a new norm - - after someone finishes talking, we all count off two seconds in our heads and only speak after that time?" Another method is to establish group norms which are regularly examined and modified to meet the group's changing interpersonal dynamics. Among these norms should be a "policing" norm which sets an expectation that members will enforce all other norms immediately after a violation. Teams may wish to create and assign a specific role of "norm enforcer" to legitimize and guarantee attention to norm violations. Enforcement needs to become as consistent as possible and may require outside intervention, such as coaching by a supervisor, the arrangement of formal training in collaborative skills for all team members, or the establishment of collaboration as an expected and inspected job function (Villa, Thousand, Paolucci-Whitcomb, & Nevin, 1990). Perhaps the most effective way of facilitating acquisition is to target two or three specific collaborative skills for practice during each team meeting and to discuss at the end of the meeting how often and how well members demonstrated the skills.

■ Conclusion

It is in regular face-to-face interchanges among members of a team that the creative work of teams occurs. Interpersonal skills for collaboration are important elements of an effective team process. Teams that are successful consciously work to build capacity in interpersonal skills of trust building, communication, leadership, creative problem solving, decision making, and conflict management. Teams that can learn to give support and feedback to members regarding the development of these interpersonal skills are sure to improve team effectiveness. Moreover, as adults demonstrate these skills, they are valuable models of collaboration for students who will be the future citizens of the highly complex and interdependent 21st-century global community to come.

Note: This article is extracted and adapted, with permission, from a chapter, *Collaborative Teams—A Powerful Tool in School Restructuring*, to appear in Villa, R., Thousand, J., Stainback, W., & Stainback, S. Restructuring for caring and effective education: An administrative guide to creating heterogenous schools. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. (P.O. Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285-0624).

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Creative Problem-Solving: Not Just for Adults

by Michael F. Giangreco

As neighborhood schooling and general education class placement for students with disabilities continue to expand, a common problem facing educational teams is the design and implementation of learning experiences that will meet the widely differing needs, abilities, and learning styles of the students who are grouped together. This can be especially challenging since some students with disabilities have instructional objectives that differ extensively from those of their classmates without disabilities. In some Vermont elementary schools, an innovative problem-solving approach has been field-tested with promising results. This approach is based upon the **Osborn-Parnes Creative Problem-Solving Process** (Parnes, 1988), known as CPS.

The CPS process, developed by Alex Osborn (the person who coined the term *brainstorming*) and his colleague, Sidney Parnes, has been used in the education of students labeled as gifted, and in other fields such as advertising and business. The process consists of six major stages:

- **The Mess**: Identifying a general problem from a variety of potential challenges.
- **Fact Finding**: Gathering information about the Mess.
- **Problem Finding**: Restating the problem and clarifying it in a way that encourages idea generation.
- **Idea Finding**: Generating many ideas as potential solutions to the problem in an atmosphere that defers judgement and encourages playfulness.
- **Solution Finding**: Evaluating the potential ideas based on set criteria to select solutions.
- **Acceptance Finding**: Refining selected solutions, developing an action plan, taking action, and recycling through the CPS process.

Based on field-testing in general education classes, variations of CPS have been specifically developed to address the needs of students with severe disabilities (Giangreco, 1990). For example, one third grade class was preparing a mural as a culminating activity to their social studies unit on cities. The teacher divided the class into four small groups of five students each. One group included Betty, a girl with intensive educational needs. The teacher assigned each group a different part of the city to draw and paint. Using cooperative group skills the class had practiced throughout the year, each group was asked to reach a consensus about what would be included in their respective parts of the city and to decide who would be responsible for drawing or painting each part. Each group also had to coordinate with every other group so that when finished the four pieces could be joined together to form a large mural of the city.

To streamline the CPS process, the teacher defined and presented the instructional challenge (*Mess and Problem Finding*), and gave the students the objectives and directions for the activity (partial *Fact Finding*). The teacher asked the class, "How can we make sure that Betty has ways to participate in this activity?" Mark said, "She's up there in her wheelchair and we're here on the floor with this big paper; we could get her out of her chair and bring her down here with us." Karen suggested, "It's good for Betty to have her arms moved and I know blue is her favorite color. We could help her hold and move the paint brush to paint the sky and water." Janet added, "Betty could help carry our list of ideas to the other groups so that we can see how our parts will fit together." Justin said, "I like music when I paint; I think it would be cool if Betty used her switch to play some music on her tapeplayer while we work together." "Hey, that makes me think, maybe we could have Betty tape our list [rather than] writing it!" commented Joe.

When provided with the opportunity Betty's classmates were able to generate a variety of useful ideas. Without formally considering the educational implications, the students adeptly generated ideas that were consistent with their own needs and that addressed some of Betty's educational priorities (e.g., activating switches, accepting assistance from others) and instructional management needs (e.g., range of motion, repositioning). Using this variation of the CPS process offered classmates an effective problem-solving process and greatly enhanced Betty's inclusion in the class. Furthermore, use of creative problem-solving to facilitate instructional inclusion of students with special needs can contribute to the sense of group cohesiveness among class members as they develop shared ownership and personal investment in their classroom. Other variations of CPS have been developed to facilitate general education inclusion for students with disabilities. The CPS process offers exciting possibilities for tapping the creative abilities of all team members, children and adults, in the development of inclusive classroom communities.

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The Classroom Is "Where It's At" for Communication Services

by Cathy Macdonald

The value of providing communication interventions within "natural contexts" as a means to facilitate the acquisition of functional communication skills has been recognized by speech-language therapists for some time. For instance, it is clearly of greater relevance and interest for students to learn to name outdoor clothing items in the context of dressing for recess than through instruction which uses pictures of coats, hats, and boots as a part of a structured training session in an isolated therapy room. As we enter the 1990's, speech-language therapists are moving even further on the LRE continuum to deliver communication services in general education classrooms to students in natural contexts of classroom curriculum, activities, and routines. This requires a shift in contexts and priorities of communication intervention as well as a shift in role for speech-language therapists.

When speech-language therapists provide services for an individual in a general education classroom, this shift in context enables them to: "(a) observe and assess how the student [and other students] functions communicatively and socially in the regular classroom, (b) describe the student's communicative strengths and weaknesses in varied educational contexts, and (c) identify which curricular demands enhance or interfere with the student's ability to function communicatively, linguistically, and socially." (ASHA, 1991). Students with communication needs have much to gain from receiving speech-language intervention which is integrated into daily classroom routines and activities. When the classroom is thought of as an environment which provides excellent opportunities for communicating with same-aged peers doing age-appropriate activities, the efficacy of facilitating communication development in the classroom over the therapy room is obvious. In a classroom-based therapy model, students learn communication skills while participating in meaningful ways in their class' school day. For students with severe disabilities, it is helpful to use the communication demands and opportunities in general education classrooms to structure assessment and intervention related to students' participation in class. Examples of social and communication competencies a therapist could facilitate for such students in the classroom setting are interacting with peers, interacting with the classroom teacher, using social greetings and farewells, using expressions of politeness (e.g., please, thank you), participating in joking and teasing, making choices and indicating preferences, asking questions, following directions, orienting toward the speaker or listener, securing listener attention before communicating, taking turns communicating in a conversation, giving feedback, using appropriate gestures and body language when interacting with others, using appropriate language/vocabulary/topic of conversation, and using intelligible speech (e.g., volume, rate, articulation)(Rainforth, York, & Macdonald, 1992).

Integrating communication interventions into general education settings allows students to increase their functional communication skills without being "pulled out" of the classroom, avoiding periods of separation which often further isolate those students with poor communication skills from their classmates. Instead, students with communication needs remain in the classroom with the constant benefit of peer models, most of whom are better communicators.

The shift in the therapist's role from direct service provider to primarily a classroom consultant working with the teacher, the student and classmates, requires both skill development in terms of collaboration and consultation and logistical changes in scheduling to allow the therapist time to observe and work with students and teachers in a more flexible manner than in more traditional service models. Block scheduling, or the allocation of longer periods of time in various learning environments, has been utilized successfully by some therapists providing service in the classroom in order to spend adequate time with students and teachers that require support, input, and/or assistance. Speech-language therapists attend to students' communication objectives by integrating interventions into the rich learning opportunities already available in the general education classroom.

The collaboration that occurs between the speech-language therapist and the classroom teacher is an additional benefit of bringing communication services into the classroom. Effective collaboration does not occur through mere coexistence in the same environment. However, as the therapist learns about the classroom curriculum, routines, and activities, and the classroom teacher learns more about students' communication abilities and needs in the classroom, true collaboration can be realized. General educators and speech-language therapists increasingly realize their shared responsiblity to meet the full scope of educational needs for students, including those for communication.

Speech-language therapists who provide communication services in the classroom setting, with all of the rewards and challenges that this entails, are finding that the classroom is a powerful natural context which can foster communication growth and development in students as an integral part of the general educational process.

Note: Reprints of this article with full citations are available from the author.

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Promoting Social Inclusion Beyond the School Community

by Brian Abery

Over the last decade, students with disabilities, their parents, and the professionals with whom they work have made significant progress toward the goal of educational inclusion. General and special educators are collaborating at an unprecedented level to design and implement inclusive educational programs. School systems are beginning to accept such programming as a basic right to which all students are entitled, and we are becoming more adept at creating the "systems" change that is a prerequisite for the success of inclusive educational programs. However, the goal of full inclusion within the community is far from being attained. Conversations with parents and youth who have participated in inclusive school programs suggest that, as far as inclusion within the broader community is concerned,

...educational programs are a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the development of social relationships and friendships beyond the classroom.

educational programs are a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the development of social relationships and friendships beyond the classroom. Students with disabilities have commented that even when they develop social relationships with peers within the school setting, it is relatively rare for these associations to carry over into the community. Parents have expressed dismay that their children have not developed friendships within their neighborhoods. This social isolation and lack of connection with the community seems to be especially true for students with disabilities at the junior and senior high school levels. It is, however, a situation that affects not only persons with disabilities, but also many youth without disabilities and contributes to the great numbers of students who "drop out" of the educational system prior to graduating.

Achieving full inclusion, in a societal as well as an educational sense, is a complex process akin to putting together a patchwork quilt. In order to achieve an outcome that is more than merely functional, but a vibrant work that will endure in the future, a large number of diverse pieces of material must be worked into a complex pattern. Individual pieces, while important, also augment the whole. While a single individual can make a quilt, it is often preferable for such an endeavor to be a group effort. Working together, the group is often able to obtain much greater diversity in the fabric of which the quilt is composed, creating a more interesting overall pattern with greater depth.

In creating a quilt, each person involved contributes material and labor, and the group as a whole must agree on the pattern or plan that will be used. While the quilt is in its initial stages of development, it is functional for those involved to work on separate pieces independently. However, at later stages, as the individual pieces of the quilt are woven together, collaboration is necessary if the overall pattern desired by participants is to be achieved. If cooperation does not occur, or the group has no overall plan/pattern to follow, the end result is likely to be a hodgepodge.

Full participation in the daily activities of the general education classroom prepares those with and without disabilities to function in integrated educational settings and activities. This is a goal that, in and of itself, is extremely important. Students with and without disabilities report learning a great deal from such interaction: not only about their peers, but about themselves. However, such programming, is unlikely to be sufficient to lead to the development of friendships within the neighborhood and community. Rather, it creates the potential or seeds for such relationships. Unless collaborative affiliations are developed with community service organizations and avenues are cultivated through which to nurture relationships outside of the school setting, it is unrealistic to expect that desired outcome will occur.

Over the past two decades, developmental psychologists have conducted extensive research on friendship development. In general, the literature indicates that children and youth tend to become friends with peers who are close in proximity, have had similar experiences, and have similar interests. In addition, studies have suggested that the longer two individuals maintain a friendship, the more similar they become in their interests, attitudes, and beliefs.

Inclusive educational programs serve an important function in that they have dramatically increased the proximity of students with and without disabilities during a significant portion of the day. Put simply, students with disabilities who attend regular classes within their home schools have better access to their peers. Because of the degree of structure inherent in the typical school day, however, this increased proximity may not always translate into expanded opportunities for social interaction and the development of friendships. This appears to be especially true in junior and senior high school environments. In addition, as school systems implement community-based curricula, youth and young adults with disabilities find themselves spending increasingly greater amounts of time in the community away from the school contexts and their peers. Without the chance to socially interact for extended periods of time, youth without disabilities often remain unaware of the gifts that students with disabilities have to offer.

It is also important to remember that a lack of physical

proximity is but one of many barriers to friendship development. Unless students with disabilities gain access to the same community experiences as their peers without disabilities, and unless proximity is increased during after-school hours, over the weekend, and during vacations, social relationships developed in school are likely to remain, at best, on an acquaintanceship level. Opportunities to access the same community experiences as peers without disabilities play a crucial role in friendship development for children and youth with disabilities. Without such access, it is unlikely that individuals with disabilities will share common interests with their peers, develop similar belief systems, or be perceived by their peers as similar. If one has not been able to participate in little league, go to rock concerts, or attend school/community dances, there will also be little for participants to discuss when opportunities for social interaction do present themselves. This results in a dilemma for many persons with disabilities who, while interested in attending such activities, typically face many barriers that prevent such participation. Inadequate transportation services, an uniformed general public, and the limited number of inclusive recreation and leisure programs available in many communities all hinder the efforts of children and youth with disabilities to fully participate in community and neighborhood life.

One approach that has attempted to facilitate youth with disabilities learning to overcome such barriers is the Community Inclusion Program, a joint undertaking of the University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration and several school districts within the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Working with students with disabilities and peers who serve as facilitators, this program provides support for youth with disabilities to participate in a wide array of age appropriate community activities that present opportunities for interactions with peers. Participants not only gain access to areas and programs within the community in which they were previously unable to participate, but learn how to collaboratively overcome barriers to community inclusion when they do arise.

Opportunities to access the same community experiences as peers without disabilities play a crucial role in friendship development...

Just as important as the skills learned by students with disabilities are the opportunities the program affords for students who serve as facilitators and others in the community to discover and appreciate the unique gifts of persons with disabilities. One facilitator, Nancy, learned the basics of reading braille from one of the young women with whom she worked. Todd, another facilitator, who was new to the metro area, discovered the finer points of using the area's mass transit system from a student with a disability who had recently completed mobility training. Deborah received free "tutoring services" when the young woman for whom she facilitated proved much more adept at learning the crocheting techniques taught in a community education class the two took together.

It is quite unlikely that these talents could have been adequately demonstrated or appreciated within a school setting, whether segregated or inclusive. Our communities provide many rich and varied avenues through which individuals can learn, grow, and contribute. Our data indicate that participation in community-based programs has led, in many instances, to increased empowerment and feelings of autonomy for participants with and without disabilities. As an example, several individuals with disabilities who received the support of community inclusion facilitators over the past year have asked to receive the instruction necessary to function as facilitators themselves in the coming year.

Inclusive educational programs and "special" projects such as the Community Inclusion Program will not, in and of themselves, be enough to significantly enrich the social lives of children and youth with disabilities. Standing alone, neither is sufficient to allow children and youth with disabilities to reach the goal toward which we all aim: full inclusion in the community. Providing a chance for students with disabilities to interact socially with their peers and learn how to remove/minimize barriers that often prevent them from gaining access to community environments in which the opportunity exists for social interaction is just one piece of the complex quilt that must be created if full inclusion is to become a reality. Collaboration between families, educators, park and recreation personnel, and the staff of other community organizations must increase if youth with and without disabilities are to have opportunities to experience the community in a manner that enhances the development and maintenance of social relationships.

While inclusive educational programs, integrated recreation and leisure projects, and inclusive community programs have helped to build the initial pieces of the "quilt," it is no longer functional for those involved to work on their separate pieces independently. We have reached a stage where continued progress will be made only if time is devoted to conceptualizing how to best weave together the individual inclusion programs that have evolved to this date so that synergistic relationships develop (i.e., programs build upon each other in a coordinated fashion such that the impact of the whole becomes greater than the sum of its individual parts). This process will be necessary, not only to facilitate the increased social inclusion of students with disabilities, but to create environments for all children that are truly communities of love and caring.

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All Means All...Even the Yes-But and Whadabout Kids

by Marsha Forest and Jack Pearpoint

Our belief is: "ALL MEANS ALL!" No buts about it. Still we hear a litany of buts that are international in nature: But...we're too small... we're too big... we don't have the budget... we don't have the community support... we don't have the training. *But* really means, I don't want to do it, or I'm not willing to figure out a way to do it! *But* is an excuse word. There are no excuses for losing the numbers of students who are presently being kicked out, pushed out, or dropped out of our schools.

The people in the system need to show students that they really care. Words like *love, compassion, caring*, and *helping* need to replace words like *control, testing*, and *behavior management*. What better way for any system to start than to welcome ALL students into its schools and classrooms and to stop sorting kids into little boxes labeled with various acronyms? Some of the kids who challenge systems the most are colloquially labeled the "Yes-But" or "Whadabout" kids. The remainder of the article introduces you to three such kids and their respective school communities that accepted and overcame the challenge.

■ Annie

Bill Gillenwater is the principal of Scott Elementary School in Greeley, Colorado. He decided in February, 1990, to close his special education rooms and move all the children into their age-appropriate homerooms — with the necessary supports going to the classroom teacher. To some this was heresy and lunacy; to most it was simply a practice whose time had come. From Bill's diary, he recalls: "I believed that moving to a fully inclusive school was really a civil rights issue. I didn't feel we could make the needed change by putting this up to a staff vote. In my mind, the rights of children were clearly being violated at the school in which I was principal. We couldn't wait an additional 20 years to correct this."

On August 20, 1990, new and historic general education class lists went up at Scott elementary. Included were several Yes-But kids, but one really stood out — Julianna, known to those who love her as Annie. Annie was a small, frail and beautiful child. For years, Annie and her family had been shuffled from program to program in search of the magic-bullet without success. Annie's parents simply wanted their daughter to go to school with her brother and sister. They wanted Annie to have friends, to have a chance to be a little girl.

In this school of 620 pupils, there was a small but vocal minority of parents and teachers who did not want Annie around. "There are special places for kids like her," said one parent. "Children labeled autistic and profoundly retarded don't belong with or near my son," wrote another. In Bill's diary was recorded: "I felt that I must be truly hearing what school principals in Mississippi heard in the 1960s. We've come so far and yet not moved an inch as a progressive and democratic society. I won't be intimidated by this vocal minority!"

Bill and the Laurence family rode out this negative wave. They had a great deal of support from friends all over Colorado and indeed from all over North America. They needed it. The most important support, however, was provided directly by Annie's classmates. To the children, Annie was not a child with challenging behavior, a case of mental retardation or autism. To these children, Annie was just another kid, just a friend.

On January 26, 1991, the Laurence's decided to have a pizza party for Annie. They invited all of her classmates. They thought maybe six would show up. To their shock and delight, 35 people showed up — children, families, friends. Norm was happy to run for more pizza. "Never in our wildest dreams did we think so many people would come," said Norm and Ellen.

The last words in this story go to Annie's wonderful teacher, June Griswold and her third grade class at Scott Elementary School. They were asked, "What advice would you give others who are thinking about inviting students similar to Annie to their schools?"

- "Tell the teachers that all kids act more normal if they are with their friends."
- "Tell everyone to treat all kids like regular kids, 'cuz like all kids are like regular kids."
- "Having Annie here has made me feel better about myself."
- "Annie makes us all feel happy. Without her we wouldn't be the best class that we are with her here with us."
- "I learn more when Annie's around. She makes me feel like I belong, too."

■ Sam

Brian Cullen is the energetic principal of St. Francis, an elementary/middle school in Kitchener, Ontario, with over 350 students. Brian decided in 1987 to close his segregated special education classes and move 17 students from self-contained classes into the regular education stream. His philosophy is straightforward: "Nothing is impossible if you have the commitment to educate all kids. You just have to work harder, problem solve, and find the right combination of supports so that kids can learn in natural settings. Some

principals still think it's okay to reject and separate kids. I just don't hold that philosophy. It is not okay to reject anyone. Another school would have recommended a psychiatric residential treatment facility for the two boys I'm talking about. But we decided they belonged at our school and we'd do everything possible to make them welcome."

Sam was described as a child with developmental handicaps who was nonverbal and whose behaviors made it difficult for him to learn or get along with others. He came to St. Francis from a distant residential treatment center for people with psychiatric problems. Sam had lived there for four years. Initially, he went for "an assessment." He ended up living there. He is now in a group home and goes to a regular high school. Brian explains the initiation to Sam at school: "When he came to our school, we knew very little about him. He simply showed up. Our first step was to get to know him. On his second day at school, he defecated and started throwing feces around the room. Kerry Gorman, a great teacher, called me on my beeper for the first time in four years. Together, we cleaned the kid up, put him back together, and continued the rest of the day. That afternoon we had a major planning meeting."

There is no doubt Sam was one of the Yes-But kids. But for Brian, there was no doubt that Sam had to stay. It never entered his mind that Sam should go anywhere else. Brian's first concern was to pull together a team of teachers. Another critical support for Sam was his Circle of Friends facilitated by Kerry. Brian remembers the first few weeks:

> We figured this was a really neat challenge. We never had a kid like Sam before. We had to set up a system to get rid of this behavior. We were also worried about chunks of the day when Sam got involved in unsafe activities. He'd run into the street and lie in the middle of the road. He'd dive in puddles of mud. One other annoying problem was that Sam would slap other kids. We were worried.
>
> There was no shower in the school so we used a pail and sponge. We had to dress for Sam's bad times, so we got big lab coats from the shop teacher and we wore boots. This was messy stuff. We think Sam really enjoyed people washing him so we switched to teaching him to clean himself, which he did. This of course took longer. He would dump the pail of water so we got him a mop. We never resorted to punishment. We needed extra clothes and that's about it.
>
> I can't believe how the other kids reacted. They were disgusted at first, but they were really sensitive. They were never mean, in fact, they were actually getting closer to him because they felt so badly for him. It was surprising but not one parent complained and believe me, they all heard about Sam.
>
> It took a good three months before we noticed any real change, but by the end of the year the defecation problem had been eradicated, Sam didn't run in the street very often, and he didn't slap anyone — well hardly ever."

At the eighth grade graduation ceremony, Sam got his certificate and the biggest round of applause of any student. Brian credits what was done to an intuitive sense about what is right and just for all kids. He says: "I don't even think about it anymore. You can take as many courses and workshops as you want, but somewhere along the line it all comes down to a gut reaction about what to do that is respectful to the youngster in question and safe for everyone else. It's the right thing to do. That's it. This kid is still really a big challenge. We didn't cure him. We did what we could do."

■ Len

Another Yes-But student at St. Francis was Len. Len came with several labels: multi-handicapped, communication disorder, trainable mentally retarded and severe behavior disorder. Brian called Len "VP" (for Vice-Principal) because he spent so much time in Brian's office refining his confrontational skills. Behavior was the big issue. Len had been shunted from class to class. He had already been kicked out of four or five others schools for his "antisocial, aggressive behavior." Reports said: "Len is too behavior disordered for the trainable retarded class and too retarded for the behavior class." This would have been funny if it weren't so tragic. He was also called a "non-reader with no interest in academics." When he arrived at St. Francis, he was 11 years old. He was placed in the regular grade five class, along with the other 11 year olds.

Len used really foul language to the teachers. He would swear like crazy. Then a miracle occurred. For six weeks there was not one incident in the regular grade six class. Joan Marsh, another amazing teacher, showered him with love and gave him the impression she was crazy about him. However, in the seventh week he freaked out! He was back in my office, but this time there was a real difference. I could talk to him this time around. He cooled down quicker, was more rational, and wanted to get back to classroom. I asked him, "What's happening? What's the matter?" His answer floored me. He said, "I really like grade 6, Mr. Cullen, but I can't fucking read." He could have blown me over with a feather. I was so moved. He finally told us something he really wanted to do. None of us had ever thought of Len reading. "Well, you better get back and learn to read. We'll teach you right away!" The special education resource team figured out that Len loved GOBOTS (robot puzzles). They went shopping that evening and GOBOTS became the initial step in Len's reading and writing program.

Len is now in high school and is reading at the grade four level. He can read announcements on the public address system and is doing well. He isn't perfect and he isn't cured. He has good and bad days, but he's still at school and he has changed dramatically.

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scores of Jane's third grade classmates on a standardized achievement test, the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), given to all third graders in this school district at the end of the school year were analyzed and compared to their peers in the school's other third grade classes. CTBS scores for individual students in Jane's classroom were matched from spring 1987 and spring 1988 and then compared with scores of students in the two other third grade classrooms. Jane's classroom had 21 students with 1987 and 1988 data while the two other classrooms had a total of 37 students with data from both years. Statistical analysis reveal no differences between the two groups of students on the basis of their standardized academic achievement scores.

■ New York: Inclusion and Severity of Disability

Christine Salisbury and her colleagues in the Collaborative Education Project, a cooperative venture between the State University of New York at Binghamton and the Johnson City Central School District, studied the impact of a phased-in inclusion program in the district's two elementary schools: Harry L. Johnson Elementary and Lincoln Elementary. The project compared California Achievement Test (CAT) reading and math scores for the two elementary schools in Johnson City from 1985 to the present, pre- and post-inclusion.

In 1986, students with mild disabilities returned to their home school and received services from district personnel. These students had previously been served out of district through the Board of Cooperative Educational Services special education structure. In 1987, five early elementary age students with severe and profound disabilities were returned to their home district and were based in a self-contained classroom at Harry L. Johnson Elementary. A high proportion of their time was spent in general education classrooms and activities. Since 1989 students with mild to profound disabilities have been enrolled in age appropriate, general education classrooms at Harry L., making this school an inclusive context. The second elementary school, Lincoln, integrates children with mild-moderate disability labels in various social and academic settings.

Using 1985 as a baseline year, data on the average CAT reading and math scores by grade indicate no significant difference between Harry L. Johnson Elementary School (where students with mild to profound disabilities attend) and Lincoln Elementary school (where only students with milder disabilities attend). These data are based on 420 students without disabilities at Harry L. and 313 students at Lincoln in grades 1-3. Data represent only scores generated on students without disabilities. Preliminary analyses of data on individual students suggests that the presence of peers with severe and profound disabilities does not inhibit rate of achievement in reading and math.

■ Michigan: First and Second Year Impacts of Inclusion

A series of studies conducted by Barbara LeRoy and her colleagues at the Center for Inclusive Education examined the effect of the first and second year of the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms in the Saline (Michigan) Area Schools. During the 1989-1990 school year, 10 students with disabilities were welcomed back from center-based programs to general education classrooms in the Saline Area Schools. The students had moderate to severe disabilities and ranged in age from 5-12 years old. All students received the majority of their educational instruction in the general education classroom. During the 1990-1991 school year, Saline continued to provide inclusive education services to these 10 students and welcomed an additional first grade student to the program.

The data reported here relates specifically to the effect of inclusion on the academic performance of a sample of the general education students in the integrated classrooms. The Gates-MacGinitie for Grade 1 and the California Achievement Test for Grades 5 and 6 were the standardized test scores used. The scores of students in the inclusive classrooms were compared, using t tests, to the scores of students in same grade classrooms not attended by students with disabilities. Results of paired comparisons indicate no significant differences in outcomes on the standardized measures between the inclusive and control classrooms.

■ Minnesota: Rural Inclusion

Since 1989 the Rum River Special Education Cooperative, located in rural central Minnesota, has undertaken efforts to fully include a number of elementary age students with moderate to severe disabilities in general education learning environments in their respective home schools. During the 1990-91 school year, a study designed to investigate the effects of inclusion on the academic performance of classmates was conducted by Mike Sharpe and John Knight of the cooperative, and Jennifer York of the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota. There was a total of 146 students involved in the study. Thirty-seven were in the experimental group (i.e., they were classmates of included students during the 1989-90 school year) and 109 students comprised the control group. The control group was defined as the 1988-89 (the school year prior to initial inclusion efforts) classmates of the students who were in classes with students with moderate to severe disabilities during the 1989-90 school year. The dependent variables were the SRA Survey of Basic Skills composite scores, reading total, language art total, and mathematics total; the Houghton-Mifflin reading series book placement level; and grades on student report cards in the curricular areas of reading, math, spelling, conduct, and effort. Pre-test and post-test score comparisons between the experimental and control groups reveal no significant differences.

The results of these four studies provide preliminary empirical evidence that the academic achievement of classmates of children with significant disabilities is not being adversely affected by inclusion. Additional and longitudinal studies should be conducted to address the question further.

The inclusion of children with disabilities is not intended to solely benefit them. It is important, then, to examine the impact of inclusion on all the children in a school community. This is done not for the purpose of determining whether a child *should* be included, but rather to ensure that the manner in which the child is included results in a quality education for all children.

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- **System wide inclusion is very different than student-specific integration**. Many schools today are being asked by parents and others to provide integrated educational opportunities to children even though an integrated approach is not endorsed system-wide. In the FNWSU inclusion and diversity are allowed and understood as the mission of the schools, system-wide. Consequently, it is rare to hear FNWSU personnel ever talk about whether or not regular class placement is appropriate. When issues arise, as they invariably do, the focus is on solving the problem rather than challenging the appropriateness of a student's placement. System-wide versus student-specific approaches to inclusive education require a deeper commitment to the principles of inclusion. In a system committed to inclusion, students' transitions from grade to grade and school to school occur systematically and routinely; in schools where inclusive placements are a unique student-specific phenomenon transitions can be problematic. Without a broad commitment to inclusion for all students, new participants in a student's program must be brought "up to speed;" it is like starting over, year after year. Finally, a systems approach differs from an individual approach in that inclusion is a concept attached to a larger effort. When specific "innovative" practices are introduced to support the larger effort (i.e., general school reform or adoption of an outcomes based model) they are more likely to be embraced and endure.

■ Effective Schools for Everyone

North American schools are being challenged to improve and become more effective. For some, "effective" means preparing graduates to be competitive in the world economy' for others, "effective" means higher overall scores on standardized tests of achievement. People of the Franklin Northwest Supervisory Union system chose to interpret "effective" in terms of social justice; that is, they saw that a community could only consider its schools effective if the schools were effective for everyone, including students with the most challenging needs. The very act of culling out some students (e.g., those with disabilities and labels; those who may adversely affect aggregate achievement scores) precludes a school from being eligible for consideration as effective.

The commitment of the Franklin Northwest Supervisory Union to restructure to address the diverse needs of learners emanated from the belief that the needs of each individual child justifies the allocation of additional resources, restructuring of programs, and the provision of a genuinely individualized educational plan. Certainly, the schools of FNWSU still are far from perfect; they will always have a distance to go to meet the needs of all children as well as they would like; but they are committed to that end. They recognize that programs need to change in response to children rather than having children fit into existing programs. As the schools of FNWSU experiment with more ad hoc structures, engage in ongoing staff development, and continue to involve parents as full members of planning teams, they will develop new approaches and solve new problems so that children can grow and learn together. The hope for the future is bright. As children grow and learn together, they will enter into adult life with values that speak to the importance of differences, and the nature of interdependence, support, and friendship.

An expanded version of this article, including citations, appears in R.Villa, J. Thousand, W. Stainback, & S. Stainback (eds.)(in press). Restructuring for caring and effective education: An administrative guide to creating heterogeneous schools. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes. (P.O. Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285-0624).

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What Do We Teach in Inclusive Learning Environments?

What we teach may appear to be our greatest challenge when educating students with disabilities in typical classes and activities. How do we promote active participation in functional learning tasks for all learners? How can curriculum be adapted or changed to meet the needs of all students? Help is on the way...

• **California Research Institute (in press). Resource manual on curriculum and adapatations. San Francisco: San Francisco State University, California Research Institute**. A manual developed through a national network of 50 full inclusion sites. Examples of curriculum development and adaptations included. For information contact Dotty Kelly, California Research Institute, San Francisco State University, (415) 338-2959.

• **Colorado Effective Education Model (in press). Curriculum adaptations manual. Denver: Statewide Systems Change, Colorado Effective Education Model.** A manual that provides curricular adaptations across subject areas, K-8. Entries by general educators. For information contact Colorado Department of Education, (303) 866-6706.

• **Rainforth, B., York, J., & Macdonald, C. (in press). Collaborative teams for students with severe disabilities: Integrating therapy and education. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.** A book containing strategies for developing integrated programs for students and for structuring collaboration opportunities for team members. Especially emphasized is the integration of OT, PT, and S/L therapist expertise throughout educational programs. For information contact Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., (800) 638-3775.

• **Stainback, S., & Stainback, W. (1992). Curriculum considerations in inclusive classrooms: Facilitating learning for all students. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.** A comprehensive overview of curricular issues in inclusive education. For information contact Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., (800) 638-3775.

• **Buswell, B.E. & Schaffner, C.B. (1991). Opening doors: Strategies for including students with challenges in regular education. Colorado Springs, CO: PEAK Parent Center, Inc.** A practical guide describing how inclusion works and how parents and educators can make it happen. Each chapter highlights issues often raised by educators and parents. For further information contact PEAK Parent Center, Inc., Integration Project, (719) 531-9400.

• **Ford, A., Schnorr, R., Meyer, L., Black, J., & Dempsey, P. (1989). The Syracuse community-referenced curriculum guide for students with moderate and severe disabilities. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.** A comprehensive guide that provides a curriculum based on social integration in which programs are designed that facilitate the inclusion of children with disabilities and foster their valued membership in the school and general community. For information contact Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., (800) 638-3775.

• **O'Brien, J., Forest, M., Snow, J., & Hasbury, D. (1989). Action for inclusion: How to improve schools by welcoming children with special needs into regular classrooms. Toronto: Inclusion Press.** A manual containing practical strategies for building inclusive school communities. For information contact Inclusion Press, (416) 658-5363.

• **Williams, W., Fox, T. et al. (1989). The Individual Program Design Series. Unpublished manuscript, University of Vermont.** The series is comprised of four manuals to assist families and educators in designing and implementing individual programs for students with severe disabilities in integrated classroom and community settings. For information contact Center for Developmental Disabilities, University of Vermont, (802) 656-4031.

■ **Institute on Community Integration Publications**

The following publications may be ordered by contacting the publications office, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, (612) 624-4512.

• **Collaborative teamwork: Working together for full inclusion.** A brochure discussing the structure of collaborative teams and how they work in supporting the inclusion of all children in their home and school communities.

• **Integrated School Communities for Students with Severe Disabilities: 10 Reasons Why.** A brochure presenting 10 reasons why educators and families are working to build inclusive school communities.

• **Integration Checklist: A Guide to Full Inclusion of Students with Severe Disabilities**. A checklist of parameters to facilitate the membership, participation, and learning of students with disabilities in general education classes and other integrated school settings.

• **Strategies for full inclusion.** A collection of papers presenting strategies for integrating elementary and secondary students with severe disabilities into general education classes. Included are strategies for building based change, IEP development, MAPS, and facilitating inclusion in general education class activities.

• **Learning together: Stories and strategies.** A collection of success stories and effective strategies emanating from the inclusion of children in typical home, school, and community environments.

• **Inclusive Education for Learners with Severe Disabilities: Print and Media Resources**. A 64 page guide to journals, books, manuals, reports, newsletters, videotapes, and other inclusion-related materials .

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determined and then criticize the idea and organize against it. Those who introduce a new way of thinking are labeled as unrealistic, starry-eyed dreamers and are often accused of being unappreciative of all the hard work and thought which preceded the current way of doing things. You cannot sell your vision to these individuals because their primary interest lies in trying to preserve the status quo and protect themselves from having to do or be anything different. Change is just too scary for these folks. Because they are primarily concerned with how change will impact them personally, the only potential for gaining their support is to demonstrate how the change might benefit them.

This story well illustrates what happens to us with regard to the choices we make in life. Take a moment to consider the options available to the little penguins in the colony. To which group do you identify with regard to the issue of inclusive education? Admittedly, the penguin story is simplistic and people do not neatly fall into one of four categories or necessarily remain there. Responding to innovation or change is a developmental process. All of us, even the plungers, go through phases such as wanting to know how this is going to affect me? Some go through those phases more quickly, and are more readily able to embrace new ideas and move them forward. Many factors impact people's tendency to plunge, follow, join, and wail, depending upon the change they are confronting, as well as aspects of their lives which have little to do with the specific innovation. There will be times and issues in each of our lives where we might accurately be labeled a plunger, follower, joiner, or wailer.

Lastly, a word to the plungers associated with developing more inclusive school communities. The importance of the penguin story lies in understanding the existence of people's differing reactions to change and using that information to work as constructively and positively as possible with each individual and group. In that regard, we offer a few final thoughts:

• Remember that the resistance to change demonstrated by people is designed to protect the resistor, not to attack those initiating change (Karp, 1985).

• Recognize that you will encounter a few individuals who have engaged in such an extended period of negative thinking that a condition called martyrdom has taken over. Beware of trying to convince them to change their minds. These are individuals who have chosen to be convinced about their own lack of choices.

• Keep in mind, and more importantly, help others to keep in in mind that developing effective educational systems to support children's learning is an ongoing process. Hopefully, we are continually working to improve upon past practice. That does not mean that past practice was bad or wrong, only that all things can be improved upon. Framing inclusion in this way may help folks to understand that inclusion is an evolution, and not a revolution.

• Don't lose sight of your own positive traits; having a vision, being willing to take risks, focusing on solutions versus problems, being enthusiastic and energetic, and recognizing that your security is internal, not external.

• Keep your sense of humor and put "have some fun" on your agenda every day.

• Circle yourself with at least a few friends and collegues so that you have a safe haven in which support and celebration are both realized. The relationships you develop in this change process will add great meaning and depth to your life.

• Never lose sight of the children. Include them in the efforts to become a more inclusive school community. They are often some of the most creative, energetic problem solvers on the team. Remain focused on the vision of children learning together. Once you've experienced the power and magic of that vision in action, you will feel affirmed, knowing that the plunge was worth the effort!

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■ Conclusion

The families and school personnel for these three kids had fears, but they persisted and triumphed. They have shown what is possible. None of these schools had extraordinary funding or staff. They were ordinary schools doing extraordinary education for all children. They had principals who were leaders with a vision and mission to educate ALL children. They are still the exception, but with such leadership this could one day be the norm.

In a delightful twist of logic, the education system NEEDS these children the most. The Yes-But and Whadabout kids are the very people who may restore spirit and meaning to our communities, nurture our sanity, and salvage our survival as a race of caring human beings. What we do and how we treat the students we call Yes-Buts and Whadabouts tell us about who we are as people, as professionals, and as a nation. Our values come clear in our reaction to these very students. They are the barometer of our values and our vision. There are no "Yes-Buts," no "Whadabouts." Just kids - KIDS who BELONG TOGETHER.

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... and more.

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